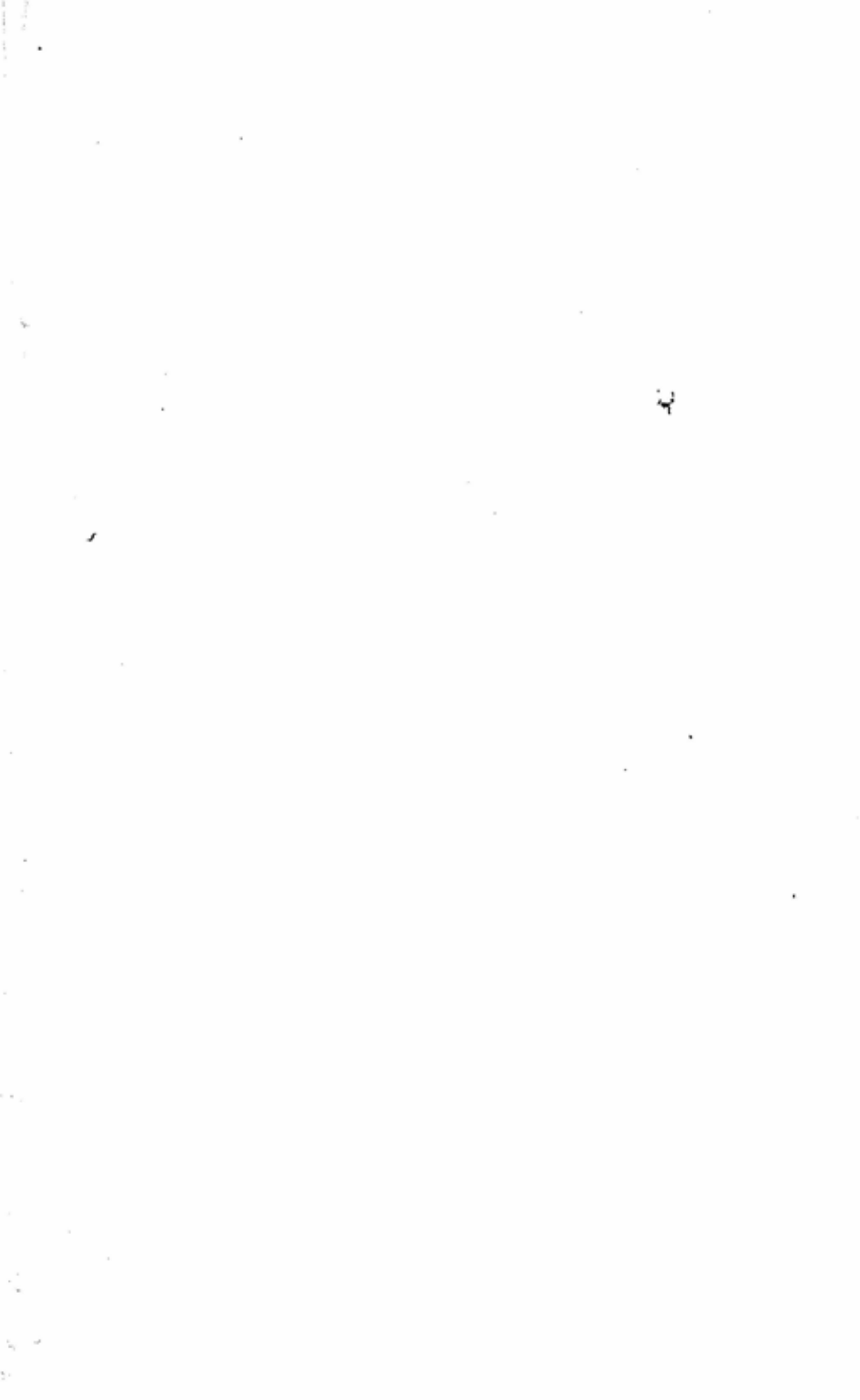


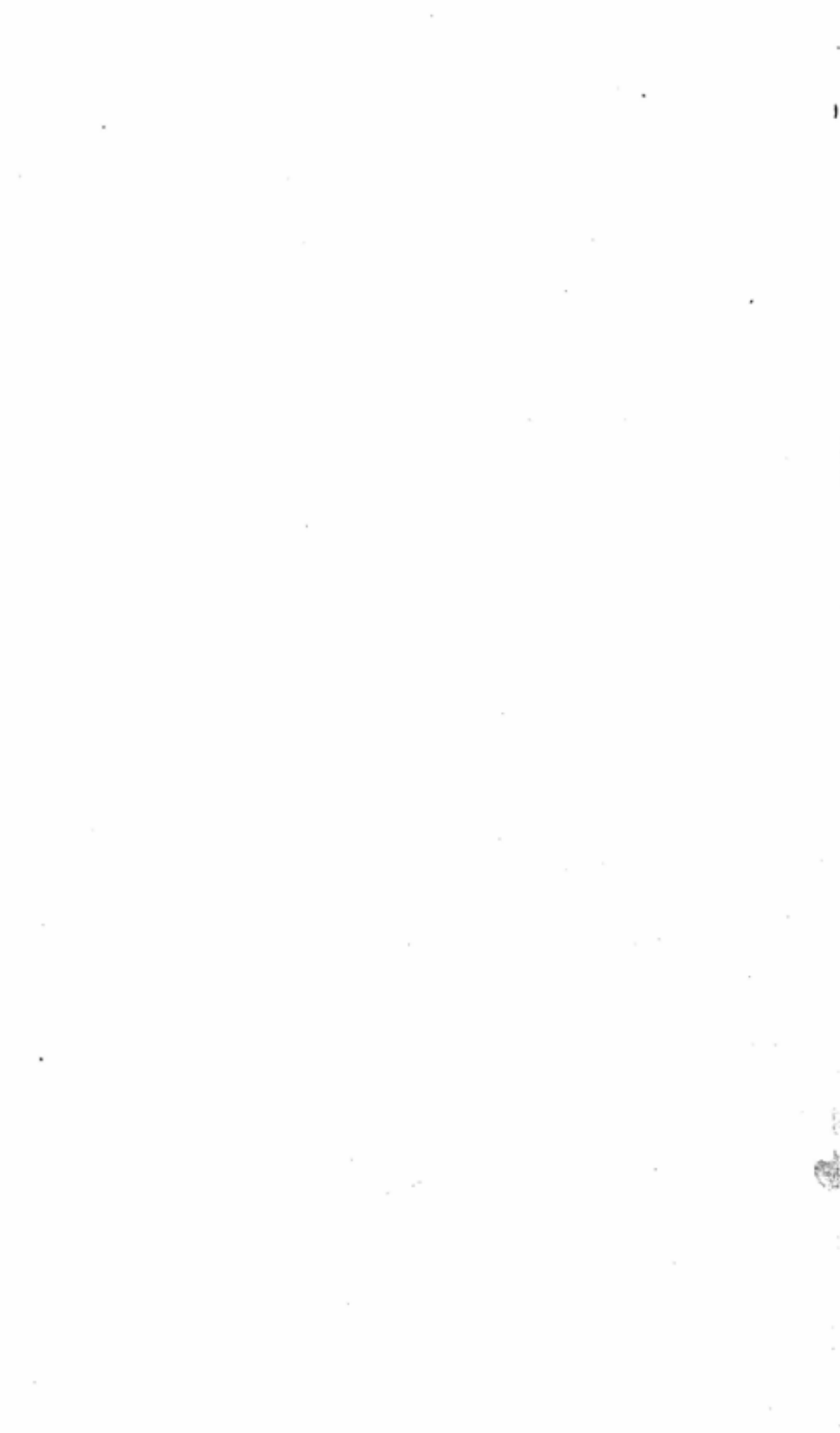
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BASES OF ISLAMIC CULTURE

by

SYED ABDUL LATIF

President

INSTITUTE OF

INDO - MIDDLE EAST CULTURAL STUDIES

HYDERABAD.



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Foreword

THIS is a companion volume to "An Outline of the Cultural History of India" published last year by the Institute of Indo-Middle East Cultural Studies, and is issued in pursuance of the Institute's objective to promote inter-cultural understanding between India and the countries of the Middle East by interpreting the culture of one region to the other. Even as the former work has set forth the values of life which have gone to shape the culture of India, the present volume has attempted to furnish a picture of the bases on which rests the cultural edifice of the people of the Middle East or the values of life which have inspired and moulded their culture.

The Middle East or West Asia is regarded as the cradle of civilization. The region has witnessed from the earliest times in history the rise and disappearance of countless cultures and the inter-action of a variety of civilizations, leaving the field for the last 13 centuries entirely to the last entrant, viz., Islam. The heritage of the earlier cultures and civilizations, one may detect in the rise of the proverbial seventy two sects of Islam in medieval times, and even in the present-day customs and manners of certain sections of the people who inhabit the region. But it is Islam which has throughout

this period remained the dominant factor in the cultural process of the people of the area, and it is the basic aspects of this process which form the subject of study in the following pages.

The work is divided into two parts, one dealing with the ideology underlying the cultural process of Islam, the other with the manner of implementing it in the different spheres of life's activity. The two cover 12 chapters, each devoted to a leading aspect of the Islamic culture. The material on which the elucidation of any cultural aspect is based is all drawn either from the Qur'an or from the traditions of the Prophet as have a bearing on the issues raised, and has been either embodied in the text of the chapter concerned or given separately under it. The idea in furnishing source material, side by side, is to afford the reader the requisite data on which he can ponder, independent of my own interpretation of it, and form his own views on the subject.

The volume has occupied my mind intermittently for nearly four years. The most laborious part of the effort lay in the selection of relevant material from the huge corpus of traditions attributed to the Prophet. Students of the subject may now add further material to what has been gathered here, and take fresher views of the subject. But to the extent of the material gathered here and within the limits of my comprehension, I have endeavoured to present the subject in a perspective such as seemed to me appropriate to it. I may add that in building up the chapters of this volume, I have freely drawn upon my previous writings,

particularly, *The Mind Al-Quran Builds*, published in 1952, and the *Asas-i-Tahzib* (Arabic - Urdu), a book of original sources bearing on the cultural role of Islam, issued in 1957. For the Quranic passages inserted in the 'Source Material', I am indebted to the extant English translations of the Quran, although in the process of their adoption, I have had, wherever considered necessary, to modify their phraseology as warranted by the sense of the original. The passages from the Hadith have in most cases been freshly translated for this Volume.

I take this occasion to express my thanks to the printers of the volume and other friends who have helped me in seeing the matter through the press while I was not in a position to attend to it myself. If notwithstanding the care taken in printing, any errors have crept into the printed matter, I trust the indulgent reader will kindly overlook them.

SYED ABDUL LATIF

Part 1

BELIEVE AND WORK — Beliefs



Chapter 1

BELIEVE AND WORK

SIGNIFICANCE

Said the Prophet of Islam : "God does not accept belief, if it is not expressed in deed ; and does not accept deed, if it does not conform to belief".

THE Qur'an is essentially a code of human conduct. That is the claim which the Book itself advances.¹ It is meant to offer guidance to those who seek it. It differs from abstract ethics in this that it purports to possess a religious sanction for those who choose to follow it, and covers a wider field of activity than what is envisaged by the latter. That by itself does not divest it of its value to those who may fight shy of religion. For, however wide and deep the religious character of its back-ground, the line of conduct delineated by the Qur'an is to be endorsed in action by a rational approach to it, and is on that account a subject for consideration even by those who may not believe in any established religion, but who, nevertheless, dislike anarchy in thought and action and recognise the need for some standard of conduct to govern their daily activity. To such, it may be told that the essential purpose of the Qur'an is to develop in man a mind the primary function of which is to enable him to live in peace with himself and in peace with his world of external relations, although, in so doing he is to serve a deeper purpose as well.

This wider applicability, which is beyond the

1. Q. 2: 2-5.

purview of abstract ethics or of any exclusively secular concept of life, is warranted by the notion maintained by the Qur'an that death is not the end of life, but that, on the other hand, it is a gateway to a new sphere of life, marking a further stage in the making of man. "From state to state shall ye, assuredly, be carried forward"² is the vista of possibilities disclosed and the life to follow is conditioned by the life already lived. The ultimate purpose is perfection of man. It is this purpose which has to govern the character of the life one has to live in the present. The mind which the Qur'an aims to build is, therefore, to view in one sweep the entire course of human life, the present and what is to follow, and treat it as a single entity, and adjust its movement accordingly. "Your creation and your resurrection are but like a single soul,"³ says the Qur'an.

The cultural process recommended by the Qur'an is summed up in but a single directive: "*Amanu wa amalas salihati*", "Believe and work righteously." The line of action suggested is that one has to grow conscious of certain basic realities or truths of life and to see that whatever one thinks or does is in conformity with them. The opening part of this volume, therefore, is devoted to a statement of these basic truths. They are expressed in the form of doctrinal beliefs which every Muslim has to profess and earnestly attempt to implement in his activity. Of these beliefs, three are regarded as of primary importance from the standpoint of 'righteous living'.

Firstly, one has to believe in the unity of God by recognising that the entire universe; both visible and invisible, owes its existence to one supreme being and is sustained by Him.

2. Q. 84: 19.

3. Q. 31: 27.

As a corollary to this, one has to accept the idea that the Universe and everything therein are created with a definite purpose, and that this purpose has a specific relevance to the life of man, and implies a specific message to mankind as a whole. One has, therefore, to believe that such a message—*ad-din*, as it is called by the Qur'an—has been delivered, from time to time, in every part of the world and to every section of mankind by godly men styled "mursalin" or message-bearers or prophets, the last in the order being Muhammad—Peace on him!—through whom this message has been re-affirmed in its final form.

Lastly, one has to believe in a life hereafter. The present life is to serve as a preparation for what is to follow. The 'Life Hereafter' is to be a life of introspection and of burning out the impurities gathered in this life recuperating man thereby for the march onward, if he has not already, in this life, equipped himself properly for the journey before him.

Such are the fundamental beliefs which one has to entertain in Islam and express in righteous activity. At the cultural plane, or in the process of implementing them, these beliefs, as explained later on, are to develop in man a living sense of God both in thought and action and equip him to work for a life of peace—peace within and peace without, peace in one's own self, and peace in one's relation with the external world around him, in order that mankind might live together, in the words of the Prophet of Islam, as "a family of God" (Bukhari), or as "a fold every member of which shall be a keeper or shepherd unto every other and be accountable for the welfare of the entire fold" (Bukhari). To so live is to live in Islam. In other words, the cultural process in Islam is to develop in man a sense of inward peace operating for peace among mankind, a sense of peace which shall keep him company in the life hereafter as well.

States the Qur'an :

"Those who believe and whose hearts find rest in the thought of God — indeed, it is in the thought of God that the heart (of man) doeth really find rest, — those who believe and act righteously, joy is for them, and a blissful home to return to."⁴

4. Q. 14 : 29.

Chapter 2

BELIEF IN THE UNITY OF GOD

THE basic concept into which the Qur'an desires to initiate the human mind is the concept of the Unity of God — a concept on which it wishes another concept, the Unity of man, to rest and receive life and sustenance therefrom. *La Ilaha Illallah*, 'There is none worthy of worship except God', is the concept on which such strong stress is laid that the entire Qur'an seems to be nothing else than an exposition of its implications and a commentary of it. The late Rev. C. F. Andrews in one of his writings observes :—

"One of the greatest blessings which Islam has brought to East and West alike has been the emphasis which at a critical period in human history it placed upon the Divine Unity. For, during those Dark Ages, both in East and West, from 600 to 1000 A. D. this doctrine was in danger of being overlaid and obscured in Hinduism and in Christianity itself, owing to the immense accretions of subsidiary worships of countless demi-gods and heroes. Islam has been, both to Europe and India, in their dark hour of aberration from the sovereign truth of God's Unity, an invaluable corrective and deterrent. Indeed, without the final emphasis on this truth, which Islam gave from its central position, — facing India and facing Europe — it is doubtful whether this idea of God as one could have obtained that established place in human thought which is uncontested in the intellectual world today."¹

Looking therefore at the low ebb to which human thought and life had descended at the time when Muhammad was passing from adolescence into manhood and from manhood into maturity, the voice in him that expressed itself in this formula was indeed the

1. *The Genuine Islam*, Singapore, Vol. I. No. 8, 1936.

imperative voice of Humanity out to assert itself, and consequently was heard throughout Arabia, and even across its frontiers during his own life-time. The spiritual implications of the concept of Divine Unity will be touched upon at a later stage in this volume; but it may be observed here that its pragmatic value to man in his social relations was immense. The idea that there was none worthy of worship except God swept off all distinctions of colour and race, and every hierarchical conception of life, social and political. It was a revolutionary slogan aiming at the emancipation of man. It restored dignity to human nature by placing man next to God and making righteous living the sole test of superiority of one over another.

The Quranic concept of God is definite, and has both a positive and a negative side to it. The positive side is that God is one and one only. The negative side is that there is none like Him. And when there is none like Him, it follows that whatever attributes that might be assigned to God cannot be assigned at the same time to any other.

Prior to the advent of the Qu'ran, two ways had been followed to catch a glimpse of Reality. One was to invest God with attributes, and the other was to divest Him of all attributes. The first approach inevitably led to anthropomorphism and created obstacles in the way of perceiving Reality. The other approach generated a process of negations which, while presenting to the mind of man, no doubt, a highly advanced transcendental concept of God, tended to deny him the consolation of any positive belief or of an active living faith. The Qu'ran avoids the two extremes. It upholds the transcendental view and also affirms attributes by asserting: "To God belong all beautiful names." But it is careful to see that no anthropomorphic atmosphere closes round the one, and no anthropomorphic touch is developed by the other. And this is done by

declaring emphatically that 'Nought is there like unto Him.'²

This stress on the uniqueness of God both in His essence and in His attributes becomes intelligible when we look to the position assigned by the Qur'an to the Prophet of Islam. Over and over again, does it point out that the Prophet is but a human being and a servant of God. The very basic creed which every Muslim has to profess runs in the following words :

"I affirm that there is none worthy of worship except God, that He is One, with none to associate with, and I affirm that Muhammad is His servant and message-bearer."

The creed is worded so, simply to prevent the Prophet from ever being hailed as God or as His incarnation, or invested with the attributes and honour exclusive to God.

That was the reason why, notwithstanding the numerous dissensions which arose among Muslims after the death of the Prophet, no difference was ever entertained among them on the question of his personality. Not many hours had passed since the Prophet's death, when Abu Bakr, the Prophet's father-in-law and the first Khalif of Islam, ascending the pulpit proclaimed :

"He who worshippeth Muhammad, let him know that Muhammad is dead; and he who worshippeth God, let him know that God is Living, and never dieth."³

He then recited the following verse from the Qur'an :

"Muhammad is no more than an apostle; other apostles have already passed away before him: if he die, therefore, or be slain, will ye turn upon your heels? But he who turneth on his heels shall not injure God at all : And God will certainly reward the thankful!"⁴

2. Q. 42: 11.

3. Bukhari.

4. Q. 3: 144.

The Qur'an bases its concept of God on the inherent urges of human nature. What is the universal human feeling about life? It is that this universe has not come into being by itself; it has been created: and so, it must have a creator, possessing attributes which qualify him to sustain and regulate in a harmonious manner the life of everything brought by him into being. These attributes, the Qur'an states, cannot be numbered, since 'God discloses Himself every moment in fresh glory.'⁵ The Qur'an mentions only a few of them. Of these, some have a mystic significance, but a large majority of them have a pragmatic value for man. Even those which lend themselves to mystic interpretation have a value of their own in the context of human endeavour towards perfection, both individual and collective. A belief in the Unity of God and His attributes, therefore, is to express itself in a form of righteous living such as shall develop an integrated personality for the individual and a united life for mankind. That is the import of the Prophet's recommendation to man to "create in one's self the attributes of God. But the point to note is this. The attributes of God, numerous as they are, do not function singly. They blend one into another in the process of expression. In conformity to this way of God or *Sunnat-Allah*, man will have to correlate the qualities imbibed of God in a manner productive of harmony in life.

Of all the divine attributes mentioned in the Qur'an, those which are frequently brought to view for the imitation of man are the attributes of *Rububiyat* (Providence), *Adl* (Justice), and *Rahmat* (Graciousness or Mercy). The first attribute postulates that God is the God of no particular section of mankind or of any particular group of people. He is the God of all mankind and of everything else in the universe, both visible to man and invisible, and is the nourisher, sustainer and developer of every one of them. They all form, to

5. Q. 55 : 29.

employ a phrase of the Prophet, "the family of God," and are therefore to be treated as a single unit in the scheme of things. That is the vision man has to keep in view when he has to implement in action his belief in the unity of God. The second attribute, that of *'Adl*, in its turn, is to enable man to exercise a sense of balance or justice in relation to his own self and in relation to his external world. And lastly, the attribute of *Rahmat*, graciousness or mercy, needs to be exercised at every turn. The mercy of God, points out the Qur'an, 'encompasseth everything in the universe.'⁶ Naturally, therefore, in the field of thought and action, a believer in God and His attributes has to give to whatever he thinks or does this touch of graciousness or mercy, so that mankind might live as one happy family. The passages of the Qur'an given below together with the traditions of the Prophet afford material for reflection on the problem of belief in the unity of God.

* * *

SOURCE MATERIAL: AL QUR'AN

God! None is worthy of worship but He, the Ever-Living the Self-subsisting Sustainer; Nor slumber seizeth Him, nor sleep; His, whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth! Who shall intercede with Him save by His leave? He knoweth what is before them and what is behind; and nought of His knowledge shall they grasp save what He willeth. His Throne spreadeth over the heavens and the earth, and the upholding of both burdeneth Him not; and He is the High, the Great! (Q. 2:255)

He is God! None is worthy of worship but He, the Knower of the invisible and the visible, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

He is God! There is none worthy of worship but

6. Q. 7: 156.

He, the King, the Holy, the Source of peace, the Bestower of security, the Guardian of all, the Mighty, the Healer, the Self-reliant. Glory to God! He excelleth all what they associate with Him!

He is God, the Creator, the Developer, the Fashioner. His are the most beautiful names! Whatever is in the heavens and in the earth extols Him. He is the Mighty, the Wise! (Q. 59:22-24)

Our Lord is He who hath given to everything its form and then guideth it aright. (Q. 20:50)

There is no creature moving on Earth whose nourishment dependeth not on God; He knoweth its haunts and final resting place; all is in an open Book. (Q. 11:6)

There is not an animal in the earth, or a flying creature flying on two wings, but they are peoples like unto you. We have neglected nothing in the book (of our decrees). Then unto their Lord will they be gathered. (Q. 6:38)

Say: He is God, The One! The Everlasting! He begetteth not, and He is not begotten. And there is none like unto Him. (Q. 112:1-4)

So strike not any similitudes for God. (Q. 16:74)

Nought is there like unto him. (Q. 42:11)

No vision taketh in Him, but He taketh in all vision: and He is the Subtle, the All-aware. (Q. 6:103)

Dost thou not see that God knoweth all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth? Three persons speak not privately together, but He is their fourth; nor five, but He is their sixth; nor fewer nor more; but wherever they be, He is with them. Then on the day of requital, He will tell them of what they had done, for, God knoweth everything. (Q. 58:7)

We created man : and We know what his soul whispereth to him, and We are closer to him than his jugular vein. (Q. 50:16)

Call upon Him by the name Allah, or call upon Him by the name Ar-Rahman ; by whichsoever name ye call upon him, to Him belong the names Most Beautiful. (Q. 17:110)

To God belong the East and the West; Withersoever you turn, there is the visage of God ; God is All-embracing, All-knowing. (Q. 2:115)

To him belongs all that is in the heavens and the earth; all obey His will.

The Creator of the heavens and the earth ; and when He decrees a thing, He but says to it "Be," and it is. (Q. 2:116-117)

Do Good. God loveth the doer of good. (Q. 2:195)

Whoso is true to his engagement, and avoideth sin, verily God loveth those that fear him. (Q. 3:76)

God loveth those who endure with steadfastness. (Q. 3:146)

Verily God loveth those who turn to Him, and loveth those who seek to be pure. (Q. 2:222)

"And your Lord saith : call Me and I respond to your call." (Q. 40:60)

And when my servants ask thee (O Prophet) concerning Me, then, I am nigh unto them, and answer the call of him that crieth unto Me. Let them in their turn listen to My own call and believe in Me in order that they might take to the right path. (Q. 2:186)

God is the Light of the heavens and the earth ; the likeness of His light is as a niche wherein is a lamp, the lamp in a glass, the glass as it were a glittering

star, kindled from a blessed tree, an olive that is neither of the East nor of the West, whose oil well nigh would shine, even if no fire touched it; light upon Light, God guides to His light whom He will! (Q. 24:35)

Praise is only for God, Sustainer, Cherisher and Lord of all Being!

The compassionate, Merciful!

King on the day of recompense!

Thee only do we serve, and Thee only do we ask for help.

Direct us to the straight path,

The path of those to whom thou hast been gracious,—

Of those who have not earned Thy displeasure, or have not gone adrift! Amen! (Q. 1:1-7)

My mercy encompasseth everything in the Universe. (Q. 7:156)

He hath imposed mercy on Himself as a Law.
(Q. 6:12)

Chapter 3

THE ROLE OF MAN

AS has already been indicated, the leading idea of the Qur'an, *La Ilaha Illallah*, 'there is none worthy of worship except God', determines man's place in the scheme of creation. It does not relegate him to a position of inferiority to any object of creation. He is not inferior in stature in the scale of divine values to the Sun or the Moon or other constellations in the heavens which have formed the objects of worship from a distance in the history of man, or to anything in the earth at close range, or again to that body of invisible forces at work in Nature styled 'mala'ik' or angels. The Qur'an points out that man is made 'of the goodliest fabric',¹ he whom the 'mala'ik' were made to offer obeisance',² and for whom 'whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth are made to do service.'³

Thus raised in the scale of creation and placed immediately next to God, man's importance is further emphasised by investing him with the privilege of living on Earth as the vicegerent of God Himself.

The truth is brought home by the Qur'an in figurative language the phraseology of which brings to mind the striking lines of Matthew Arnold entitled "Revolutions" dealing with the same issue:—

"Before man parted for this earthly strand,
While yet upon the verge of heaven he stood,
God put a heap of letters in his hand,
And bade him make with them what word he could.

And man has turned them many times : made Greece,

1. Q. 95 : 4. 2. Ibid 2 : 32 3. Ibid 45 : 12 ; 31 : 19.

Rome, England, France :— Yes, nor in vain essayed
 Way after way, changes that never cease.
 The letters have combined : something was made."

Indeed, something was made; but the poet in sorrow exclaims :

"Ah ! an inextinguishable sense
 Haunts him that he has not made what he should,
 That he has still, though old, to recommence,
 Since he has not yet found the word God would.

And empire after empire, at their height
 Of sway, have felt this boding sense come on ;
 Have felt their huge frames not constructed right,
 And dropped, and slowly died upon their throne."

That was Arnold's approach, evidently inspired by St. John's : 'In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.' Here the purpose of man was to find out the Word. On the other hand, the reflex process is what is revealed by the Qur'an. It does not suggest that God merely 'put a heap of letters into man's hand when he parted for this earthly strand and bade him to make with them what word he could.' It affirms that the 'Word' itself was shown to him and its meaning explained. Indeed, lest he might forget its structure and composition, this very word was transfixed in his nature, bidding him to preserve it therein and not to play with its letters and disturb their arrangement, so that he might live in peace with himself and in peace with his external world of relations. States the Qur'an:

"And when thy Lord said unto the angels : Lo, I am about to place a vicegerent in the Earth, they said : Wilt thou place therein one who will do mischief and shed blood, while we, we hymn Thy praise and extol Thy holiness ? He said : surely, I know that which ye know not."

"And He taught Adam *all* the names; then showed the objects to the angels saying : Inform me of the names of these, if ye are in the right.

"They said : Glorious art Thou : We have no knowledge saving that which Thou hast taught us Surely, Thou alone art the Knower, the Wise !

"He said : O Adam ; Inform them of their names, and and when he had informed them of their names, He said : Did I not tell you that I knew the secrets of the heavens and the earth?"⁴

Thus rendered conscious of the purpose of creation and of the 'Names' or the meaning of things, or the laws of their existence, it followed as a corollary that man should affirm the unity of existence.

"And when thy Lord took out from the loins of Adam's children their progeny, and made them affirm, (saying) : Am I not your Lord ? They said : Yea, we affirm."⁵

So equipped, man's nature found itself agreeable to bear the trust of vicegerency.

"Verily we proposed to the heavens and to the mountains to receive the trust, but they shrank from receiving it and were afraid of it. Man alone undertook to bear it."⁶

The undertaking was, on the face of it, not an easy affair. The Qur'an is struck by its very audacity as the continuation of the verse suggests : "Lo ! How unfair and harsh was man to himself!—Not aware of what exactly he undertook."⁷ But the purpose of his creation was nevertheless to carry him "onward from state to state"⁸ towards the state of perfection. The process was designed for him as part of the divine scheme—an aspect of creative evolution to which fuller attention will be drawn in due course. But to lessen the pang implicit in the ordeal and to help man bear the burden of the trust undertaken, and to keep the life intended for him, or the letters of the 'Word' revealed to him, in proper form, says the Qur'an, a sense of balance was set in his nature and he was told that he would be judged according to the use he makes of it.

"Allah it is who hath revealed the Word with truth and the Balance."⁹

4. Q. 2, 28—31.

5. Q. 7, 171.

6. Q. 33, 72.

7. Q. 33, 72.

8. Q. 84, 19.

9. Q. 42, 16.

"By the soul and Him who balanced it and infused in the same the sense of discrimination and the power of choosing between the wrong and the right, happy is he who keepeth it pure and unhappy is he who corrupteth it."¹⁰

The truth of the last verse is expressed by the Qur'an in a paradox, each side of which is meant to be equally true :

"Surely, We created man of the goodliest fabric; then we rendered him the vilest of the vile."¹¹

Every thinker in every age has had to recognise this paradox in human nature. The task of every religion has been to save man from sinking in the scale of life. Says the Qur'an in continuation of the paradox for the sake of clearing the issue raised therein :

"Then we rendered him the vilest of the vile, save those who believe and work righteously."¹²

Some lay stress on faith or belief as the means of salvation. But 'Belief' alone is not enough in Islam. Righteous work in consonance therewith is equally incumbent on man. That is the way to fulfilling one's responsibility as the vicegerent of God on earth. The form which 'righteous work' is to assume in the context of the role to be discharged is outlined in the following utterance of the Prophet :

"Mankind is a fold every member of which shall be a keeper or shepherd unto every other, and be accountable for the welfare of the entire fold."¹³

"O Lord : Lord of my life and of everything in the Universe! I affirm that all human beings are brothers unto one another."¹⁴

The sphere of responsibility is extended further. States the Prophet :

"All creatures of God form the Family of God;

10. Q. 91: 7-10, 11. Q. 95: 4-5, 12. Q. 95: 5-6;

13. Bukhari: *Kitabul Iman*, 14. Ahmed: *Musnad*; Abu Dawud.

and he is the best loved of God who loveth best His creatures.”¹⁵

And his directive runs :

“Respect the ways of God, and be affectionate to the family of God.”¹⁶

It is those who respect the ways of God and scrupulously follow them in life who alone are to be truly regarded as the vicegerents of God on earth. Their function is to be interpreted in terms of the good that they can offer not only to themselves and to fellowmen, but to all other living objects on earth who together form “the family of God”, every one of whom has a being from their Maker and to whom they also will be gathered.

There is not an animal in the earth, or a flying creature flying on two wings, but they are peoples like unto you. We have neglected nothing in the book (of our decrees). Then unto their Lord will they be gathered.¹⁷

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SOURCE MATERIAL: AL-QUR'AN

O ye mankind ! surely we have created you a male and female, and made you tribes and families that you may recognize each other; surely the noblest of you in the sight of God is the one among you most mindful of his duty. God is Knowing, Fully awake. (Q. 49-13).

O men! Be mindful of your Lord, who hath created you of one man and of him created his wife, and from the twain hath spread abroad so many men and women. Verily is God watching over you. (Q. 4:1).

For this cause have we ordained to the children of Israel that he who slayeth any one, unless it be a person

15. Q. Baihaqi: *Kitab-ul Iman, Shu'ab-ul Iman*. 16. *Ibid*.

17. Q. 6: 38.

guilty of man-slaughter, or of spreading disorder in the land, shall be as though he had slain all mankind; but that he who saveth a life, shall be as though he had saved all mankind. (Q. 5:32).

And hold ye fast by the cable of God, all of you, and break not loose from it.—(Q. 3:103).

CRITERION OF DEVOTION TO GOD.

Righteousness is not that you turn your faces (for daily prayers) towards the East or the West, but he is truly righteous who believeth in God, and the last day, and the angels and the Scriptures and the Prophets; who for the love of God gives of his wealth, however cherished, to his kindred, and to the orphans, and the needy, and the wayfarer, and those who ask, and for ransoming the slave, who observeth prayer, and payeth the prescribed alms, and who is of those who are faithful to their engagements when they have engaged in them, and endure with fortitude poverty, sickness and perils—these are they who are true in their faith and these are they who are truly righteous. (Q. 2:177).

Has thou marked him who believeth faith? He it is who thrusteth away the orphan, and urges not others to feed the poor. So woe to those who engage themselves in prayer, but are heedless of what they pray; Who make a show of devotion, yet refuse help to the needy.

(Q. 107: 1:2)

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SOURCE MATERIAL : AL-HADITH

Family of God :

1. Said the Prophet: O Lord! Lord of my life and of everything in the Universe! I affirm that all human beings are brothers unto one another.”—Ahmed, Abu Dawud.)

2. All creatures of God form the family of God and he is the best loved of God who loveth best His creatures.— (Baihaqi : *Kitab ul-Iman*, *Shu'ab ul-Iman*)

3. Respect the ways of God and be affectionate to the family of God.—(Baihaqi: Kitab al-Iman, Shu'ab ul-Iman).

Every one responsible for the Welfare of every other :

4. Mankind is a fold every member of which is a shepherd unto every other, and will be accountable for the welfare of the entire fold.—(Bukhari: Kitab al-Iman).

United life for man:—

5. Islam demands a united life for man.—(Kunuzu-l-Haqaiq).

6. Said the Prophet : Unity is bliss : Disunity is misery. (Kunuzu-l-Haqaiq).

7. The Muslim who lives in the midst of society and bears with patience wrongs done to him is better than one who shuns society and cannot bear any wrong done to him.—(Tirmizi).

8. In living devotion to God, live a united life as brothers unto each other.—(Kunuzu-l-Haqaiq).

9. One believer is for another believer what one part of the foundation of a wall is to another, each lending strength to the other. Then joining the fingers of both his hands in a grip said : 'they are joined together like this.'—(Bukhari, Kitab al-Adab).

10. Said the Prophet : 'You will find all believers in God as firm and united together in ties of love and kindness as the limbs of a body. If one part of it gets pain, all other parts feel affected in sympathy.
(Bukhari, Kitab al-Adab).

11. Dissensions ruined the people who lived before you.—(Kunuzu-l-Haqaiq).

Love of God to be expressed in love of Man.

12. Said the Prophet: whosoever loves another for the sake of God in reality has expressed his love for God.—(Ahmed: Musnad).

13. I have heard the Prophet saying: "God says: it is obligatory on me to love those who for my sake love each other and meet together and spend on each other out of what they have.—(Malik: Muatta).

14. God says: If you wish to receive graciousness from me, show graciousness to those whom I have created.—(Kunuzul Haqaiq).

15. Treat kindly the dwellers of the earth and God will treat you kindly.—(Bukhari, Kitab al-Adab).

16. Said the Prophet: A Believer is truly the centre and embodiment of love and affection. There is no goodness in him who does not show affection for others and for whom others do not show affection.—(Musnad and Baihaqi).

17. "God says," related the Prophet, "Love becomes obligatory on my part who for my sake love one another, and live together and who for my sake greet each other with a goodly cheer, and who for my sake spend of what they earn for the good of one another.—(Malik: Muatta).

18. None among you is a believer in God unless he wishes for his brother what he wishes for himself.—(Bukhari: Kitab al-Iman).

19. Said the Prophet: Be faithful to God and be brothers to one another.—(Bukhari).

20. Said the Prophet: Of all human actions, the one which pleases God is that expression of love which

is expressed for the sake of God and that expression of dislike which is expressed for the sake of God.—(Abu Dawud).

21. He who, for the sake of God, has loved another human being, that person verily has extolled the glory of God.—(Ahmed: Musnad).

22. Ma'ad bin Jabal asked of the Prophet what form of faith is good or by what kind of action is such a faith acquired? Said the Prophet in reply: "Your likes and your dislikes should be for God only; and every moment of your life, you should feel you are living in the presence of God." Ma'ad asked: what else? The Prophet continued, "and wish for others what you wish for yourself and dislike for others what you dislike for your own self."—(Ahmed: Musnad).

23. He who loves or hates, offers favours or withholds them, and whatever he does, does so for the sake of God, he perfects his faith.—(Bukhari; Muslim, Abu Dawud).

24. The Prophet once said: On the day of Judgement, God will address a particular individual: "O Son of Adam! I was sick, but you did not attend on me." Bewildered, this individual will say: How is that possible? You are after all the Supreme Lord of all the Worlds (and cannot fall sick). God will reply: "Do you not remember that so and so among my servants was ill and lying close to you, and you did not turn to him in sympathy. If you had but gone near him, you would have found me beside him." In like manner, God will address another individual: "O son of Adam! I had asked of you a piece of bread; but you would not give it to me." The individual will submit: "How is that possible? Could God feel hunger and need bread?" God will reply: "So and so among my servants had in a moment of hunger asked of you bread, and did you not refuse to give it to him? If you had given him

food, you would have found me beside him." Similarly, God will turn to yet another and address him: "O son of Adam! I was thirsty and I asked of you a cup of water, but you did not give it to me." The individual will cry out: "How is that possible? How can God feel thirsty?" God will reply: "So and so of my servants who was thirsty asked of you water, but you did not give it to him. If you had given it to him, you would surely have found me beside him."—(Muslim).

25. These three things also enter faith—to help others even when one is himself economically hard pressed; to pray ardently for the peace of all mankind, and to deal justice to one's own self. — Amar bin Yasir (Bazzar).

26. Faith expresses itself in numerous ways. Humility is one of them. The highest form is admission in spirit of the truth that there is none worthy of worship except God. And the most ordinary is to remove any obstacle lying across a wayfarer's path.—Abu Huraira (Agreed).

Working for Peace :—

27. Said the Prophet: Shall I tell you what type of charity is most pleasing to God? It is to restore peace where peace is disturbed.—(Kunuzul Haqaiq).

28. Said the Prophet: Shall I tell you what is better than prayer and fasting and the highest form of charity? It is to resolve internal dissensions and bring about concord between contending parties. It is internal dissension that primarily ruins a society.—Ibn Maja, Tirmizi, Ahmed).

29. There is no good in the company of the man who does not wish for thee what thou desireth for him. —(Kunuzul Haqaiq).

30. Live together, do not turn against each other, make things easy for the other and do not put obstacles in each other's way.—(Kunuzul-Haqaiq).

31. It is narrated by Abu Shari that the Apostle of God (peace be on him) emphatically exclaimed; "He —He is not a believer in God." The question was asked: "O Apostle of God! who is he?" He declared: "He whose neighbour does not feel secure on his account." —(Bukhari).

32. Abu Huraira narrates that the Apostle of God said: "He who believes in God and the Day of recompense will never harm his neighbour, will be hospitable to his guests, and speak to others in a gentle tone or remain silent."—(Bukhari).

33. The believer in God is he who is not a danger to life and property of any other.—(Tirmizi, Nisai, and Bukhari).

34. A true believer in God does not curse others or taunts at them; nor does he indulge in slander or abusive language.—(Tirmizi and Baihaqi).

35. Wisdom lies in loving each other without depriving the other of his rights.—(Kunuzul Haqiaq).

36. The disposition and the very nature of a believer can contain all qualities except dishonesty and falsehood. — (Musnad and Baihaqi).

37. The Apostle of God said: Tenderness always lends beauty to one who displays it in one's relations with others. On the other hand, a lack of it lends ugliness.— (Taisirul Usul: Kitabur Rifaq).

38. He who accompanies a wicked person in order to help him in his wicked designs, and knows that the persons whom he has agreed to help in his designs is a wicked person, straightaway ceases to be a believer.— (Baihaqi).

Chapter 4

BELIEF IN REVELATION

THE unity of man receiving its sustenance from the belief in the unity of God is one of the main objectives of the Qur'an. How to project, therefore, and advance the process, at first at home, and in due course in the wider world, was the primary problem before the Prophet. The initial task was to weld those immediately around him into a model society, *Ummatan Wasata*, to serve as a nucleus for a widening brotherhood of man. But the prospect was fraught with stupendous difficulties. The bulk of the people were polytheists divided into tribal groups. The thought of one God or of the unity of God had to be awakened in them. The rest of the people were mainly composed of, what the Qur'an called, the "people of the Book"—the Jews and the Christians. In the eyes of the Prophet, these two communities had fallen off from the essential teaching of their prophets which was but the same as had been revealed to him. These had to be reclaimed. Such was the dual task before the Prophet in the initial stage of his mission.

What was the procedure which the Prophet followed to bring both the sections to the path of unity? To the polytheists, primarily of Mecca, he had to address himself as a *Nazir*, a warner, and also as a *Bashir*, a bearer of good tidings.¹ As *Nazir*, he had to warn them of the inevitable consequences of their unrighteous living resulting from their attachment to polytheism, and as *Bashir*, he had to offer them tidings of progress and prosperity in life if only they could turn to the

1. Q. 35:24.

one God of the Universe, and practise righteousness in their lives, in other words, to the simple teaching of their own ancestor,² their forgotten Prophet, Abraham, which had now been revived for them in the form of the Qur'an as revealed to him.

To the people of the Book, he had to address himself in a somewhat different form. He spoke to them that the truth which Abraham had preached was already with them in the form of the Torah and the Evangel, the scriptures which they respectively held sacred. His only regret was that they had "rent their great concern, one among another into sects, every party rejoicing in that which was their own,"³ and denying on that basis, salvation to each other.⁴ He told them that he had been inspired to remind them of this and to re-present to them the neglected truth in the form of the Qur'an. Over and over again, did he proclaim that the Qur'an was but an affirmation⁵ of what had already been delivered to their Prophets as well as to all other prophets raised in the past in the different parts of the world and indeed, a summing up of all that had been hitherto imparted to man from the Lord of all mankind,⁶ in order that it might "bring him out of darkness into light, into the path of the Mighty, the Glorious—of God."⁷

He hath ordained for you (Muhammad) that faith which He commended unto Noah, and which we inspire in thee and which we commended unto Abraham, Moses and Jesus, saying: Establish the Faith, and be not divided therein. (Q. 42: 13)

Say: We believe in God, and in that which has been sent down unto us, and sent down unto Abraham, Ishmail Isaac, Jacob and the tribes. We believe in all that was given unto Moses, Jesus and other apostles of their Lord. No distinction do we make between them, and unto Him we surrender. (Q. 3:84)

2. Q. 90: 3. 3. Q. 23:53. 4. Q. 2:111.
5. Q. 3:2 6. Q. 98:2-3. 7. Q. 14:1-2

Verily we have sent thee (Muhammad) with the Truth, a comforter and warner; and there is not a people but a warner hath not passed among them. (Q. 35:24)

Verily, we sent messengers before them. Of some, we have told thee, and of some we have not told thee. (Q. 40:78)

And we never sent a Messenger save with the speech of his people that he might make himself clear to them. (Q. 14:4)

In truth hath He sent down to thee the Book which confirmeth those which precede it. (Q. 3:2)

A messenger from God reciting pure pages Wherein are all the true scriptures. (Q. 98:2-3)

A Book have we sent down to thee that by their Lord's permission thou may'st bring men out of darkness into light, into the path of the Mighty, the Glorious—of God, to whom belongeth whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth. (Q. 14:1-2)

But the opposition which he had to encounter both at the hands of the *Mushrikin* or polytheists and the people of the Book, the Jews and the Christians, and the trials, tribulations and persecution which he had to face till his mission succeeded in the end in reclaiming the whole of Arabia, with the exception of the small colonies of Jews and Christians, to the path of monotheism, is now a matter of history.

What we have to note here is that the peaceful tenor of his preaching never wavered, never developed bitterness even under the most serious provocation; for, such was the advice which the Qur'an had offered to him.

Summon thou (Muhammad) to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and with kindly warning: argue with them in the kindest manner: thy Lord best knoweth those who stray from His way, and He best knoweth those who have yielded to His guidance.

If ye care to answer any wrong done to you, do it to the same extent that ye were injured : but if ye can endure patiently, best will it be for the patiently enduring.

Endure then with patience. But thy patient endurance must be sought in none but God. And be not grieved about the unbelievers, and be not troubled at their devices; for God is with those who fear him and do good deeds.

(Q.16: 125-127)

God will, perhaps, establish goodwill between yourselves and those of them whom ye take to be your enemies. God is powerful and God is Gracious, Merciful. (Q. 60: 7)

Even when the Prophet's following grew in numbers and developed into a State, the Quran would not allow any one among them to take to any high-handed methods to bring round the recalcitrants.

Let there be no compulsion in Religion : Now is the right way made distinct from error. Whoever therefore shall deny Taghut and believes in God—he will have taken hold of a strong handle that shall not be broken : and God is He who heareth, knoweth. (Q. 2 : 256)

Assuredly we have sent down the Book to thee for man and for the ends of truth. Whoso shall be guided by it—it will be for his own advantage, and whoso shall err, shall only err to his own loss. And thou art not a guardian over them. (Q. 39:41)

In fact, the Prophet knew full well that his vision of mankind developing into a single family, "the Family of God" would not be fulfilled in a day. But the way to it had to be paved. Now that he was at the head of a large newly formed community following the faith of the Qur'an which had to live side by side with other communities, the Jews and the Christians following other faiths, the path of wisdom lay in devising a *modus vivendi* whereby friction between them might be eliminated, and better understanding established. The Qur'an therefore asked the Prophet to make a move :

Say: O People of the Book! Come to a word fair

between us and you – that we worship not aught but God; and that we join no one with God, and also that the one of us take not the other for Lord beside God. Then if they turn their backs, Say : Bear ye witness that we are those who have surrendered (unto God). (Q. 3:64)

The offer here is of a federal principle for the reunification of the human race, by resting human relationship *at least* on a common belief in the Unity of God consciously operating for the Unity of Man—a common ground on which all humanity may enter to work together for their common good. The Qur'an's supreme insistence on this minimum – a belief in the Unity of God – was for no other reason than that such a belief, if sincerely held, was bound to transform itself into the sense of the Unity of man which alone was a guarantee against ill-will between man and man.

It is in this context that the term *Kufr*, disbelief, plays such an important part in the Quranic thought. The term has acquired an odium among non-Muslim circles purely through an inept approach to its connotation and its indiscriminate and reckless application by fanatics to all non-Muslims and even to Muslims who differ from them in any respect. For that, the Qur'an is not responsible. A 'Kafir' in reality is one who disregards the Unity of God by his thought and action and thereby becomes a force for disunity among men, which in the Quranic concept is a denial in practice of one's belief in Divine Unity. The Quran thus makes no compromise with *Kufr*, for, it is obvious that *Kufr*, the force for disunity cannot co-exist, much less work hand in hand, with the force for unity in any conceivable scheme of things aiming at the unity of man. So sensitive is the Qur'an on this issue that it regards as veritable 'Kafirs' those who reject apostles of God other than their own, or accept some and reject others, and thus provoke dissensions among mankind.

Barring this ideological difference with *Kufr* in all its forms, and also with another factor for disunity viz., *shirk* or attributing the quality of divinity to any one or anything beside God, a term which in its derivative, *Mashrikin*, was applied by the Qur'an primarily to the polytheists of Mecca who had violently opposed the mission of the Prophet and were in a state of war with him for a considerable time, in other words, with all forces for disintegration or disunity, the basic attitude of the Qur'an towards other faiths is either of seeking a *modus vivendi* as indicated above, or of tacit tolerance and forbearance, in the earnest hope and trust that one day "God will bring them all together," and advance the cause of divine unity working itself out in the unity of man.

For this cause invite them thou (O Muhammad) and go straight on as thou hast been bidden, and follow not their ways, and say : In whatsoever scriptures God hath sent down, do I believe : I am commanded to deal justly with you. God is your Lord and our Lord : Unto us the result of our deeds and unto you the result of your deeds : *between us and you let there be no strife; God will bring us all together : and unto Him is our journeying.*"

(Q. 42:44)

Such is the final note of tolerance which the Qur'an strikes in the earnest hope that mankind would develop some day the mood for viewing things in proper perspective and would come closer together and fulfil the Prophet's vision of a single family of mankind, 'the family of God' or of a 'fold, every member of which shall be a shepherd unto every other and be accountable for the welfare of the entire fold.' This is the import of the second cardinal belief in Islam, the belief in all prophets or messengers of God and in the divine scriptures revealed to them.

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SOURCE MATERIAL:—*AL-QUR'AN*

Prophets raised among all Sections of Mankind :

Verily we have sent thee (Muhammad) with the Truth, a comforter and warner; and there is not a people but a warner hath not passed among them. (Q. 35 : 24).

Verily, we sent messengers before thee. Of some, we have told thee, and of some we have not told thee. (Q. 40 : 78).

And we never sent a Messenger save with the speech of his people that he might make himself clear to them. (Q. 14 : 4).

No apostle have we sent before thee to whom we did not reveal that "Verily there is no God beside me : therefore serve me. (Q. 21 : 25).

Religion at the advent of the Prophet :

Men were of one religion only : then they fell to variance. Q. 10 : 19).

But men have rent their great concern, one among another into sects; every party rejoicing in that which is their own. (Q. 23 : 53).

The Qur'an recognises previous Scriptures :

O you who believe ! Believe in God and His Messenger and the Book which He has sent down to His messenger and the Books which He sent down aforetime. And whosoever disbelieveth in God and His angels and His Books and His messengers and the Last Day, he indeed strays far way. (Q. 4 : 136).

He hath ordained for you (Muhammad) that faith which He commended unto Noah, and which we ins-

pire in thee and which we commended unto Abraham, Moses and Jesus, saying : Establish the Faith, and be not divided therein. (Q. 42:13).

Say : We believe in God, and that which has been sent down unto us, and sent down unto Abraham, Ishmail, Isaac, Jacob, and the tribes. We believe in all that was given unto Moses, Jesus, and other apostles of their Lord. No distinction do we make between them and unto Him we surrender. (Q. 3 : 84).

The Messenger believes in what has been revealed to him from His Lord, and (so do) the believers. They all believe in God and His angels and His Books and His Messengers.

We make no distinction between any of His messengers. And they say: We hear and obey : Our Lord; Thy forgiveness (do we crave). To Thee is our eventual course. (Q. 2:285).

The Qur'an confirms previous Scriptures :

In truth hath He sent down to thee the Book which confirmeth those which precede it. (Q. 2:2).

A messenger from God reciting pure pages, Wherein are the true scriptures. (Q. 98:2-3).

A Book have we sent down to thee that by their Lord's permission thou may'st bring men out of darkness into light, into the path of the Mighty, the Glorious—of God, to whom belongeth whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth.—(Q. 14:1-2).

No discrimination between Prophets :

Of a truth, they who believe not on God and his Apostles, and seek to separate God from his Apostles, and say, "Some we believe, and some we believe not, and desire to take a middle way:

These! they are veritable disbelievers (Kafirin) and for the disbelievers have we prepared a shameful chastisement.

And they who believe on God and his Apostles, and make no difference between them—these! we will bestow on them their reward at last. God is Gracious, Merciful. (Q. 4:150–152).

No compulsion in Religion :

Follow thou what has been revealed to thee from thy Lord; there is no God but He; and turn thou away from the polytheists.

Had God willed, they would not have associated others (with God); and We have not appointed thee a watcher over them, neither art thou their guardian.

Reville not those whom they call on beside God, lest they, in their ignorance, spitefully revile Him. So we have decked out fair to every people their works; then shall they return to their Lord, and He will declare to them what they have been doing. (Q. 6:107–109).

And thrust not thou away those who cry to their Lord at morn and even, craving to behold his face. It is not for thee in anything to judge of their motives, nor for them in anything to judge of thee. If thou thrust them away, thou wilt be of the doers of wrong. (Q. 6:52).

And they say, "None but Jews or Christians shall enter Paradise." This is their wish. Say : Give your proofs if he speak the truth.

But they who set their face with resignation Godward, and do what is right,—their reward is with their Lord; no fear shall come on them, neither shall they grieve.

Moreover the Jews say, "The Christians lean on nought:" "On nought lean the Jews", say the Christians: Yet both are readers of the Book. So with like words say those who have no knowledge. But on the resurrection day, God shall judge between them as to that in which they differ. And who committeth a greater wrong than he who hindereth God's name from being remembered in his places of prayer and who hasteth to ruin them? Such men cannot enter them but with fear. Their's is shame in this world, and a severe chastisement in the next. The East and the West is God's; therefore, whichever way ye turn, there is the face of God: Truly God is immense and knoweth all.

(Q. 2: 111-113)

Yet all are not alike: Among the People of the Book is an upright folk, who recite the signs of God in the night season, and adore.

They believe in God and in the day hereafter and enjoin justice, and forbid evil, and speed on in good works. These are of the righteous.

And of whatever good ye do, ye shall not be denied the meed. God knoweth those who fear Him.

(Q. 3: 113-115)

Let there be no compulsion in religion. Now is the right way made distinct from error. Whoever therefore shall deny Taghut and believes in God—he will have taken hold of a strong handle that shall not be broken: and God is He who heareth, knoweth.

(Q. 2: 256)

Assuredly we have sent down the Book to thee for man and for the ends of truth. Whoso shall be guided by it—it will be for his own advantage, and whoso shall err, shall only err to his own loss. And thou art not a guardian over them. (Q. 39:41)

And say : the truth is from your Lord : let him then who will, believe ; and let him who will, be an unbeliever. (Q. 18:29)

Summon thou to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and with kindly warning : argue with them in the kindest manner : thy Lord best knoweth those who stray from his way, and He best knoweth those who have yielded to his guidance.

If ye care to answer any wrong done to you, do it to the same extent that ye were injured : but if ye can endure patiently, best will it be for the patiently enduring.

Endure then with patience. But thy patient endurance must be sought in none but God. And be not grieved about the unbelievers, and be not troubled at their devices ; for God is with those who fear him and do good deeds. (Q. 16: 125-127)

God doth not forbid you to deal with kindness and fairness toward those who have not made war upon you on account of your religion, or driven you forth from your homes ; for God loveth those who act with fairness. (Q. 60: 7-8)

God will, perhaps, establish good will between yourselves and those of them whom ye take to be your enemies. God is Powerful : and God is Gracious, Merciful. (Q. 60:7)

Modus vivendi : Nexus for Human Society :

Say : O People of the Book ! Come to a word fair between us and you—That we worship not aught but God, and that we join no other god with Him, and that the one of us take not the other for lord beside God. Then if they turn their backs, Say : Bear ye

witness that we are those who have surrendered (unto God). (Q. 3:64)

Tolerance :

For this cause summon thou them to the faith, and go straight on as thou hast been bidden, and follow not their desires : and Say : In whatsoever Books God hath sent down do I believe : I am commanded to decide justly between you : God is your Lord and our Lord : we have the result of our works and you have the result of your works : between us and you, let there be no strife : God will make us all one : and to Him shall we return. (Q. 42:15)

AL-HADITH

Religious Good Will :

1. Abu Huraira narrates : On the day the Prophet heard of the death of the (Christian) Negus of Abyssinia, the Prophet came out of the city with his following. He asked them to stand in rows and conducted the funeral prayers of the Negus in absentia. (Bukhari)

2. Narrates Muhammad Bin J'afar: When a deputation of Christians from Najaran came to the Prophet at Madina, he accommodated its members in the mosque of the Prophet ; and when the time for their prayer came in the evening, he let them perform their prayers in their own way in the mosque itself. At this certain followers of the Prophet raised objection. He remonstrated with them and allowed the Christians to turn towards the East (towards Jerusalem) and allowed them to proceed with their prayers.

Ibn al-Qayyim : Zadul M'ad Fi Huda Khair al 'Ibad

3. Narrates Jabir Bin Abdullah : A coffin passed before us. The prophet who was with us at the time stood up while the coffin passed, and we too stood up. After it had gone, we said to the Prophet : 'This was the coffin of a Jew.' The Prophet said : 'Whenever you see any coffin passing by, stand up, whether that is of a Muslim or of a non-Muslim.' (Bukhari)

Chapter 5

BELIEF IN LIFE HEREAFTER

IN some form or other, the belief in the life hereafter is common to all faiths. What that life in reality is can be known only when one enters upon it. It is certainly not a return to earth again or what is called a 'rebirth' in flesh and blood. Life according to the Qur'an is not a cycle. It is a linear line and is to be "carried forward from state to state",¹ from one lower to one higher state or plane. The description of the life to follow given in the stories which have found their way into the Hadith literature and which have exercised a fascination for the mediaeval mind among Muslims has, except in a few cases, no parallel in the Qur'an. The Quranic method is to convey just a vision of it, and that too by means of what are specifically called *amthal* and *mutashabihat* parables, similitudes, and metaphors, essentially symbolic in import: for, the life beyond is something which man in his present environment can scarcely comprehend or understand.²

The vision conveyed by means of *amthal* and *mutashabihat* is intended to be satisfying to the intellect alike of men of insight and of the less gifted. The righteous shall have a life of peace and the unrighteous of disquiet. That is the impression which they are meant to convey. And as the similitudes offered are necessarily to be drawn from the life of comfort known, the picture of comfort provided is that of gardens beneath which rivers flow, of fountains of milk, of pleasant society and so forth. But there is always a corrective to the picture clinching the vision. The gardens of Heaven are different from those of this world. The fruits

1. Q. 84:19. 2. Muslim: *Kitab al-Jannat Wa sifatih.*

are not subject to seasons.³ The water of its rivers does not petrify: it tastes differently.⁴ The companions are not set in corporeal frame: they are made of purity, and do not age.⁵ They do not hold vain discourse.⁶ The entire vision is rounded off by a Hadith-i-Qudsi, which emphasises that these *amthal* or similitudes cannot afford even a glimpse of reality: "God says: He has prepared for his righteous servants what no eye hath seen and no ear hath heard and no mind of man hath conceived!" Likewise the *amthal* touching the life in Hell, all drawn from the field of corporal suffering in this world, are meant to symbolize the condition in which the soul of the unrighteous will find itself in its new setting. The Qur'an itself affords clarification. "What will convey to thee what the Consuming Fire (Hell) is?" asks the Qur'an, and itself furnishes the answer: "It is the fire kindled by God which leapeth up over the hearts."⁸ The verse likens Hell to a mind in spiritual distress.

The picture of Heaven and Hell, which the Qur'an conveys through its *amthal* is that of two different states of the human soul set in an environment different from that in which its present life is lived. A conversation of the Prophet with an envoy from Heracleus, recorded by Imam Fakhruddin Razi in his *Tafsir-i-Kabir*, under verse 3:127, throws light on the view advanced. Referring to the verse, "And vie one with another for forgiveness from your Lord and for a Paradise vast as the Heavens and the Earth prepared for those who are righteous,"⁹ the Roman representative asked: "Where does Hell exist if Paradise extends over the heavens and the Earth?" Quietly the Prophet parried: "Glory be to God! Where is the night when the day dawns?"¹⁰

I may proceed a step further. According to the

3. Q. 13:35. 4. Q. 47:16-11. 5. Q. 2:23.

6. Q. 19:63. 7. Muslim, *Kitab al-Jannat wa Sifatih*.

8. Q. 104:5-7. 9. Q. 3:127.

10. *Tafsir-i-Kabir* by Imam Fakhruddin Matba-i-Amira Razi, Vol. III, P. 75, Istambul.

Qur'an, every one will have to pass through Hell.¹¹ It is contended by the commentators of the Qur'an that the text refers to a bridge over Hell which, as stated in a Hadith,¹² one has to cross on the Day of Judgement—an idea which curiously runs parallel to what prevailed in early Zoroastrianism.¹³ The Qur'an, may it be pointed out, makes no specific reference to the provision of such a bridge. Even so, the contention that Hell and Heaven are but two different states of the soul in the life hereafter is upheld by the very Hadith which provides a bridge across Hell: for, to the Faithful, Hell will say: "Cross the bridge, O true believer, for thy light hath put out my fire." The issue is clarified by Jalaluddin Rumi, the poet and mystic, in his *Mathnawi* II, 2554 – 2568.

"At the gathering for judgment the faithful will say:

O Angel, is not Hell the common road,
Trodden by the believer and the infidel alike?
Yet we saw not any smoke or fire on our way."

Then the Angel will reply: "That garden which ye saw
as ye passed,
Was indeed Hell, but unto you it appeared a pleasance of
greenery.

"Since ye strove against the flesh and quenched the
flames of lust for God's sake,
So that they became verdant with holiness and lit the
path to salvation;
Since ye turned the fire of wrath to meekness, and
murky ignorance to radiant knowledge;
Since ye made the fiery soul (nafs) an orchard where
nightingales of prayer and praise were ever singing,
So, hath Hell-fire become for you greenery and roses
and riches without end."¹⁴

Whatever the nature of Hell or Heaven, it is to be admitted that life in either sphere must eventually subserve some ultimate divine purpose common to all

11. Q. 19-72-73

12. *Mishkat*: Bab al-hauz wal shifatifi.

13. *The Gospel of Zaratushtra* by Duncan Greenlees, The Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, 1951 pp. 124-138.

14. *Rumi*: Selections, by R. A. Nicholson, Allen and Unwin Ltd. London, 1950.

mankind who according to the Qur'an mark a distinct stage in creative evolution. The process has necessarily to continue. Heaven and Hell, whether they are mere states of the soul or otherwise cannot therefore remain so for all times. That will be stagnation and the stultifying of the purpose of evolution. Hence it is that the Qur'an takes particular care to disclose the destiny of man. "From state to state" or from one plane to another, 'shall ye, assuredly, be carried onward.'¹⁵ It is a promise held out to the righteous and the unrighteous alike. And how is this to be fulfilled?

The Qur'an makes it repeatedly clear that every one, whether righteous or unrighteous, will have to carry with him to the next stage in life the reactions of his deeds indelibly impressed on his soul. His action, his thought, his speech, his feeling, his imagination – nay, even his fancy; will cling to his neck tenaciously and mark the character of the life he has lived.

'And every man's deed have we fastened about his neck: And on the Day of Resurrection will we bring forthwith to him a book which shall be proffered to him wide open: 'Read thy book: there needeth none but thyself to make out an account against thee this day.'¹⁶

In ways peculiar to the new stage of life, will every one be made to realise the beauty or the ugliness of the life he had pursued in the past, but which through ignorance, perversity or wilful disregard of the "signs of God," he had refused to see for himself while he had still the time and opportunity to make amends, guided by the "balance set in his nature." The beauty of his past life or its ugliness is brought face to face with him in the stage after death in a form which, in his fresh set-up, he will behold with joy or look upon in helpless anguish.

In the Quranic view, the 'life beautiful' is to march onward towards perfection. Likewise, the 'life ugly'

15. Q. 84:19.

16. Q. 17: 14-15.

has first its own process of purification to go through. For the one, there is freedom of movement: for the other, there is the handicap of the self to overcome. The situation of the one is styled as 'Qurb,' nearness to God, the other, 'Bu'ad' or distance from God. It is this distance which is but a reflection of its unrighteous life on earth, the distance, so to say, that he had assumed towards God in his earthly life. "He who has been blind here shall be blind in the hereafter, and wander yet more from the way."¹⁷ It is the resultant distance from God that will be galling to the soul of man. In the scriptural terminology, it would be "Hell" for him, as "Heaven" for the other. "The most favoured of men," said the Prophet, "will be he who shall see his Lord's countenance and His Glory, night and day, a felicity which shall surpass all the pleasures of the body as the ocean surpasses a drop of perspiration."¹⁸

In this connection, let me observe that, in the Quranic sense, Hell and Heaven begin for man in this very life; for, whatever good or evil he does, at once becomes part of him and begins to give him a foretaste of Heaven or Hell to follow. The good deed will promote spiritual elevation; the evil deed, its own downward feeling. If man could but realise the ugliness of his deed before his death and feel sincerely repentant, and retrace his steps, there is always the grace of God to bring him peace of mind.

"And we will surely cause them to taste the mild chastisement close at hand before the great chastisement that overtakes, that they might turn to us in penitence."¹⁶

"He it is who accepts repentance from his servants and pardons the evil deeds."²⁰

That is the way to burn out impurities or pass through Hell in order to fit oneself to enter Heaven. Realisation of the ugliness of sin is naturally painful. It is mental and spiritual torture, or, in the language

17. Q. 17:74.

19. Q. 32:21.

18. Muslim. *Kitab al-jannat wa sifatifi*.

20. Q. 42:24

of the Qur'an, 'Hell-fire.' The process of purification is needed not merely for the habitual transgressors, but even for those essentially righteous who at times fall off the righteous track; for, no human being is infallible. In their case, while they are equipped in every other way to enjoy freedom of movement towards perfection, they will have to drop before their march begins that which retards progress. In the imagery of the Qur'an, they have to enter Heaven by a passage through Hell, even as others.²¹ The essentially righteous finish this course in their present life by a painful realisation of the nature of whatever error they might have fallen into. It is a process of repentance in time and of forgiveness, and of spiritual cleansing before death. It is to them will the words be addressed :

"O thou soul that art at rest !
Return to thy Lord, well pleased and well pleasing.
Enter thou among my servants;
And enter thou my Paradise."²²

They will have no further need to pass through this mill of purification, for, they have already gone through it in their present life. The process will certainly await those who have deliberately neglected their opportunities while they had the time to do so. It is they who shall have to pass in their next stage through the ordeal of 'fire' and in the language of a Hadith 'made clean' by it before they are allowed to enter Heaven to resume their march towards perfection.²³

"From state to state shall ye, assuredly, be carried onward", is then the plan of life, as visualised by the Qur'an. The 'life beautiful', will be carried forward from state to state till it reaches perfection and one beholds the very 'visage of God.' The 'life ugly' naturally will lag behind, and will have to make up a long leaway before it can emerge into the life of free movement. How long the process of purification will last is a matter with

21. Q. 19:72. 22. Q. 89: 27-30. 23. *Ad Din* :
A collection by Mawlana Abdul Qadir Siddiqi, p. 94.

God. The term "abad", loosely rendered into English as "eternal" on the analogy of the Judaic and Christian concept, is in the Quranic sense just a period appropriate to the sin requiring purgation as fixed by God according to His own sense of time and His own sense of values. Else, we shall have to face the thought of 'duality' or a multiplicity of undying units possessing or claiming the quality of co-existence in eternity with God, a thought running counter to the Quranic concept of God, as also to the assertion of the Qur'an that all created objects shall have an end one day.' Surely, Hell and Heaven enter the list.

That such is the meaning implied by the term 'abad' as used by the Qur'an in respect of the process of purification in Hell is manifest from a more explicit term used to specify the duration. Verses 22 and 23 of Ch. 78 speak of Hell as a "home of transgressors to abide therein for 'ahqab.'" 'Ahqab' is the term here used which is plural of 'huqb' which, according to the Arabic English Lexicon by E. W. Lane, means a period which may range from one year to eighty years, denoting at best a long time. Again, verses 109-110 of Ch. 11 of the Qur'an discountenance the idea of a life in Hell without end. While the blessed shall abide in Paradise "as long as the Heavens and the Earth endure with whatever imperishable boon thy Lord may please to add", the life in Hell of the unrighteous "shall last as long as the Heavens and the Earth endure, unless thy Lord willeth otherwise; Verily thy Lord doeth what he chooseth." Note that life in Hell and Paradise cannot be eternal, since it cannot survive the Heavens and the Earth which have one day to disappear. Note also the phrase, "unless thy Lord willeth otherwise," and view it in the light of the interpretation given to the 'Will of God' in the Chapter, "Freedom of Action: Will of God", of this volume, and it will be clear that life in Hell is to be commensurate with one's transgressions in this life. For, indeed, that such is the import of the phrase, is clear from the following verse :

Whosoever will come with a good deed, for him, there

shall be the like of it ten-fold, while whosoever will come with an ill-deed, he shall be requitted with only one like it, and they shall not be treated unjustly.²⁴

Every ordeal of purification in Hell to be undergone in consequence of an evil action has thus a limit set to it. For, to prolong the ordeal beyond the limit warranted by the character of the evil done, or for ever, will clearly be injustice, and the verse promises that "none shall be treated unjustly". Adds the Qur'an:

God truly will not wrong any one of the weight of an atom; and if there be any good deed, He will multiply it, and from His presence shall be given a great recompense.²⁵

The general attitude towards the problem of Hell, notwithstanding the graphic symbolism employed to reveal the hideousness of sin and its consequences, is one of pity transformed into an ultimate force for mercy. "My mercy triumphs over my displeasure, have I inscribed on my Throne," says God, according to a Hadith-i-Qudsi of the Prophet.²⁶ The Qur'an itself records the divine affirmation: "My mercy encompasseth everything."²⁷ And that should help one to reject once for all the theory of an eternal Hell so strongly upheld even today by our orthodox theologians. Let me quote a few Hadith of the Prophet in support of the contention.

Imam Muslim records a Hadith touching those for whom none will come forward to intercede on the Day of Judgment and for whom, through His own infinite sense of mercy, will God declare Himself the intercessor:

Allah will then say: The angels and the Prophet and faithful, they all have interceded for the sinners (who had done some good) and now there remains none to intercede for the rest except the most merciful of all

24. Q. 6: 61.

25. Q. 4: 44.

26. Bukhari; *Kitab Bad'al Khalkh'* and *Kitab al-Tawhid*.

27. Q. 7: 156.

merciful ones. So, He will in his hand bring out from fire a people who never worked any good.²⁸

Kanzul-Ummal records two sayings of the Prophet:

"Surely a day will come over Hell, when it will be like a field of corn that has dried up after flourishing for a while." "Surely a day will come over Hell when there shall not be a single human being in it."²⁹

In the *Sihah*, there are on record the following sayings of the Prophet:

When a period will pass over the inmates of Hell, the Lord Compassionate will put his foot on it and Hell will break down and disappear."³⁰

Hell will always desire more and more sinners to pour in; but a time will come when God the Almighty will thrust his foot into it to see if that could not satisfy it. When Lo! Hell will cry out: Enough, enough, I seek refuge in Thy might and in Thy compassion and will cease to exist.' Heaven will always have a vast unoccupied space. God will people it by a new type of people who will thereafter dwell therein."³¹

The idea is to let the inmates of Hell pass in-to Heaven after they have gone through a process of purification.

That the companions of the Prophet were aware of this attitude of the Prophet towards the problem of Hell, may be gathered from a saying of Khalif Omar recorded in *Fath-ul-Bayan*, *Fath-ul-Bari*, *Durri-Mansur* and *Had'il-Arwah* of Ibn-i-Qayyim which runs :

Even though the dwellers in Hell may be numberless as the sands of the desert, a day will surely come when they will be taken out of it.³²

28. Muslim: *Kitab al-jannat wa sifatihi*.

29. *Kanzul Ummal*, Vol. VII, p. 245, Dairat ul Maarif, Hyderabad, India.

30. Muslim: *Kitab al-jannat wa sifatihi*.

31. Bukhari: *Kitab al-Tawhid*.

32. *The Holy Qur'an* with Commentary by Muhammad Ali, p. 172, footnote.

The notes of warning in the Qur'an against sinful life and the description of the consequences to follow, which form part of the 'Kitab', have a 'Hikma' attached to them. This Hikma or purpose is obviously to create in man the sense of horror for sin. They are there to desist him from it, and to induce in him the sense of repentance if he is already involved therein. Repentance is sure to meet with forgiveness; for God is 'Oft-forgiving,' 'Oft-returning' and 'Gracious is He to those who return to Him.' The idea is to eliminate from human life every form of resistance which sin offers to spiritual development or purity of life. To realise the nature of sin and to resolve to make amends is no doubt a trying process. But it is better one goes through it here rather than in the hereafter, where one will have to realise the hideousness of sin and burn out all impurities attached to one's soul on its account. This process of purification is, in reality, an expression of Divine mercy. The sooner man repents, whether here or there, the earlier is the dawn of freedom for him to move forward. The everlasting consignment to Hell is repugnant to the Hikma underlying all references to sin and its consequences. That will be arguing against the principle of movement implicit in the verse: "From state to state shall ye, assuredly, be carried onward." At the same time it will be imposing a limit on the exercise of Divine mercy. God definitely refuses to agree to any limit:

"O my servants who have transgressed against their souls! Despair not of God's mercy; for, *God forgiveth all sins.* He indeed is Gracious, Merciful."³³

The principle of movement "from state to state onward" is brought to mind repeatedly by the Qur'an to warn those who would not believe in death opening a new life. The Book reminds man of the most obscure conditions in which his life began and emphasises that, as even from a lower stage to a higher, man's development has been marked, even so after death the

movement upward will continue.

For, He it is who hath formed you by successive stages.³⁴

And it is he who hath created man of water.³⁵

And God hath caused you to spring forth from the earth like a plant.

Hereafter will He turn you back into it again, and will bring you forth anew.³⁶

"From it (earth) have we created you, and unto it will we return you, and out of it will we bring you forth a second time."³⁷

Now of fine clay have we created man: Then we placed him, a moist germ, in a safe abode; Then made we the moist germ a clot of blood; Then made the clotted blood into a piece of flesh; Then made the piece of flesh into bones; And we clothed the bones with flesh: Then brought forth man of yet another make—Blessed therefore be God, the most excellent of makers! Then after this ye shall surely die: Then shall ye be waked up on the day of Resurrection.³⁸

"This is He who . . . began the creation of man with clay; Then ordained his progeny from germs of life, from despised water:

Then shaped him, and breathed of His spirit into him, And gave you ears and eyes and hearts.³⁹

Thinketh man that he is to be left to drift?

Was he not a mere embryo in the seminal elements?

Then he became a clot; then (Allah) shaped and fashioned

And made of him a pair, male and female.

Is not He able to bring the dead to life."⁴⁰

And from state to state will ye, assuredly, be carried onward.⁴¹

The statement of the Qur'an quoted above and similar statements therein have stimulated the formulation of several theories touching the evolution of man and his destiny. But it is the biological character of these statements which has attracted special attention.

34. Q. 71:13.

37. Q. 20:57.

40. Q. 15:36-40.

35. Q. 25:56.

38. Q. 23:12-16.

41. Q. 84:19.

36. Q. 71: 16-17.

39. Q. 32:9.

Speaking of the interest Muslim thinkers have evinced in the subject, Sir Mohammad Iqbal draws particular attention to the attitude assumed by the mystic poet, Mawlana Jalaluddin Rumi, and observes by way of endorsement :

"It was only natural and perfectly consistent with the spirit of the Qur'an, that Rumi regarded the question of immortality as one of biological evolution, and not a problem to be decided by arguments of a purely metaphysical nature, as some philosophers of Islam had thought. The theory of evolution, however, has brought despair and anxiety, instead of hope and enthusiasm for life to the modern world. The reason is to be found in the unwarranted modern assumption that man's present structure, mental as well as physiological, is the last word in biological evolution, and that death, regarded as a biological event, has no constructive meaning. The world of today needs a Rumi to create an attitude of hope, and to kindle the fire of enthusiasm for life. His inimitable lines may be quoted here :

"First man appeared in the class of inorganic things,
Next he passed therefrom into that of plants.
For years he lived as one of the plants,
Remembering naught of his inorganic state so different;
And when he passed from the vegetal to the animal state,
He had no remembrance of his state as a plant,
Except the inclination he felt to the world of plants,
Especially at the time of spring and sweet flowers,
Like the inclination of infants towards their mothers,
Who know not the cause of their inclination to the breast.
Again the great Creator, as you know,
Drew man out of the animal, into the human state,
Thus man passed from one order of nature to another,
Till he became wise and knowing and strong as he is now,
Of his first souls he has now no remembrance,
And he will be again changed from his present soul."⁴²

Interesting and attractive as is the vision of the evolution of man presented to us by Rumi and endorsed in scientific terminology by Sir Mohammad Iqbal who claims to be the disciple of "Pir-e-Rumi", the point

42. "The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam", Oxford University Press, 1934, p. 114.

should not be overlooked that the primary purpose of the Qur'an is not to present to the world of man a factual account of the rise and development of man as might be upheld by the discoveries of science. The statements of the Qur'an touching the subject do lend themselves to biological interpretation; but they certainly do not substantiate the view advanced by Rumi that before man assumed his present form, he had to live in succession as an inorganic substance, a plant, and an animal, or that he would replace his present form by that of an angel, and so forth. The Qur'an does postulate that man is the result of an evolutionary process and that this process will continue even after what is called death, but does not posit or specify any distinct progressive biological stages therein such as specified by Rumi.

The Qur'an divides the movement of human life into two broad periods. Firstly, there is the period of man's making till he receives consciousness by the 'spirit of God' being 'breathed into him', and he becomes an embodied soul. This is the period which the Qur'an refers to in the verse: "It is He who hath formed you by successive stages."⁴³ The period beginning with this moment and continuing thereafter crossing the line of what is termed 'death' is the period that matters. It is this which the Qur'an has in view when it asserts: "From state to state shall ye assuredly be carried onward."

The earlier movement has indeed a biological setting. But the subsequent is clearly indicated by the Qur'an to be spiritual in form and character. The terms employed by it to distinguish the one from the other bear out the distinction suggested. In the one *اُطواراً* 'atwaran' is the expression used, and in the other *طَبَقٌ عَنْ طَبَقٍ* 'tabaqan an tabaqin.' In the one, the

43. Q. 21:13.

Qur'an states that through successive اطوار formations or stages of growth and development, man has been made; whereas in the other, it states that from one طبق or from one lower plane or state to one higher طبق plane or state, man will assuredly be carried onward. The two terms connote two different types of stages. The former refers to a physiological development as in the mother's womb. The biological mould or form or 'taur' is completed in the emerging child which thereafter merely expands its physical dimensions till death overtakes them. But the 'spirit of God' which, as the Qur'an points out, is 'breathed' into him when he emerges as a child, gathers increasing consciousness and develops an individuality. It is this spirit or ego, as it is styled by philosophy, which is addressed by the Qur'an: From state to state shall ye assuredly be carried forward : ' It is that which does not disappear with the disappearance of the body. It retains its individuality and assumes an independent existence the moment it discards its physiological covering or association.

The question may arise here : what after all is this, the spirit of God breathed into man as he emerges out of the womb of his mother? Is it any extraneous element infused into the body? Or, is it an offshoot of the body itself moulded in its very form and permeating it through and through and composed of something so delicately elusive or fine that the science of biology, as it has developed so far, cannot bring it within its purview—an offshoot of the body possessing the talent to develop, through the instrumentality of the body, an individuality such as might outlive it, and thereafter live on its own? To attempt or suggest an answer to this might be a straying away from the issue we have been pursuing. The Qur'anic statement is definite. No matter how the spirit or ego functioning in the body of man takes its rise, it is its progress, both here and in the hereafter which is the subject of reference in the Qur'anic verse : "From state to state,

shall ye, assuredly, be carried onward."

It has already been observed that the Qur'an divides the life of man into two broad periods. During the early period or before the 'spirit of God' is breathed into him,⁴⁴ no responsibility is attached to man in the making, since he is not conscious of the movement. The question of responsibility arises the moment consciousness begins to be at play. The first stage in this period which closes with what is called 'death' is the basic stage of preparation for all subsequent stages. It is the stage of freedom of will and action or of willing co-operation with the laws of life helped by the balance set in the nature of man. What follows is but a continuation of it. "Your creation and resurrection are but like a single soul."⁴⁵ Even in this stage, the march onward is conditioned by a conscious effort appropriate to every new move. This is implicit in the urge one will feel there for 'light' and more and more of it. "Our Lord! perfect for us our light,"⁴⁶ will be the perennial prayer of the aspirant. Every fresh instalment of light acquired or vouchsafed is thus a new state of life, accompanied by 'death', that necessary concomitant of life, the birth pang ushering in a new state of existence. 'It is we who have decreed that death should be among you:'⁴⁷ "Blessed is he..... who hath created death and life to test which of you is best in point of endeavour."⁴⁷ Throughout, the spiritual purpose persists.

It is this aspect, the spiritual; which the Qur'an desires to emphasise for the guidance of man, and not exactly the biological. That this aspect has not been lost sight of by Rumi notwithstanding his biological obsession as displayed in his lines quoted by Sir Mohammed Iqbal, is clear from a re-statement of the same biological process in the following lines:

I died as a mineral and became a plant,
I died as plant and rose to animal,

44. Q. 31:27. 45. Q. 66:8. 46. Q. 56:60.

47. Q. 67:2.

I died as animal and I was man.
 Why should I fear? When was I less by dying?
 Yet once more I shall die as man, to soar,
 With angels blest; but even from angelhood
 I must pass on: all except God doth perish.
 When I have sacrificed my angel-soul,
 I shall become what no mind e'er conceived.
 Oh, let me not exist! For non-existence
 Proclaims in organ tones: "To Him we shall return."⁴⁸

Here the biological process, even as Rumi conceives, is rendered dependent upon a conscious effort, upon the "sacrifice" of a lower nature in search of a higher. And that is essentially a spiritual process.

How to discard or sacrifice in this present life a lower nature in search of a higher, or to secure in this very life the talent for an easy movement in the next, is the question which presents itself for consideration. The answer is already given by the Qur'an "Believe and work righteously." But what is righteous work as warranted by a belief in the 'life-hereafter'?

It may be recalled that the Qur'an assigns to man "the vicegerency of God on *earth*." Be it noted that the term is not repeated or applied to him in relation to his life hereafter. The reason is obvious. The belief in the unity of God and in the truth of the divine message delivered from time to time through His messengers is to express itself in the unity of man, or in a peaceful order of existence for him. The function of vicegerency has a meaning only in relation to this specific purpose. It ceases with death, for the character of life hereafter assumes a change. It has no longer the same sociological or economic or political background for the display of its activity. There, God does not need to speak to man through "vision or from behind a veil, or through a messenger."⁴⁹ On the other hand, he comes face to face with Reality and finds his own way

48. Rumi: Selection by R. A. Nicholson, p. 103.

49. Q. 42:51.

guided by whatever light his past existence might throw before him, intensified by further light vouchsafed to him in his new surroundings. There, neither the wealth nor the power of the past will avail. There will be there little talk of democracies or parliaments or of any schemes of world security. The most powerful and exalted in this life who have lived unrighteous lives may have to step aside to let their own erstwhile valets, who have lived righteous lives, pass by in their onward march. "The blind in this world will carry their blindness into the next," says the Qur'an, "and will be further away from the road."⁵⁰ It is this road that matters. The Qur'an desires man to enter on this road in this world itself, so that he may equip himself with the requisite talent to have a freer passage thereon when he resumes or pursues it in the next. "Life of this world is but a play and disport," adds the Qur'an, "the next world is Life indeed."⁵¹ This "Life indeed" is to begin in this world itself.

The "Life indeed" is marked by an yearning on the part of the traveller for light and more of light. "Perfect for us, O Lord, our light" will be according to the Qur'an his constant prayer—the light that must lead him on into the very presence of Reality, "the countenance of God", the very "Light of the Heavens and of the Earth," as the Qur'an terms it.

"God is the Light of the Heavens and of the Earth. The similitude of His Light is as it were a niche wherein is a lamp, the lamp within a glass, the glass as though it were a pearly star. It is lit from a blessed Tree, an olive tree neither of the East, nor of the West, the oil whereof were like to shine even though no fire were applied to it; Light upon Light; God guideth to His Light whom He will."⁵²

The yearning for light or apprehension of Reality has to begin in this life; and this is possible only for

50. Q. 17:74. 51. Q. 29:64. 52. Q. 24:85.

those who develop what is called "Huzur ma'l llah" or "the sense of God" in every situation. Prayed the Prophet in a moment of ecstasy :

"O Allah pour light into my heart, Pour it into my eyes, and into my ears. Pour it to my right and pour it to my left. Pour it in front of me, and behind me and give me light. Pour light into my nerves, and into my flesh, and into my blood, and into my hair, and into my skin, and into my tongue, and into my soul and increase my light, and transform me into light; and surround me with light. O Allah Bless me with light."⁵³

The injunction "believe and work righteously" has a special meaning for one who feels the sense of God in all that he feels or does. The sense of God marks the difference between those who do a thing because it has to be done, is a duty imposed, because it brings them reward or because it has to be done to avoid discomfort in life, between these and those who do a thing not exactly for the recompense that it may bring but because a good deed, however trying in its accomplishment, is good in itself and is pleasing to God, a thought in which he finds comfort and peace of mind. It is this sense that one has to develop here if one is to equip oneself for the onward march from state to state in the next sphere of existence. To such men or women Paradise has no abiding attraction. Like that great sage of Baghdad, Shaikh Abdul Qadir al Jilani, they aspire to leave Paradise behind once they reach it, and march onward beyond it towards greater light and greater perfection.⁵⁴

But few may possess or develop the talent so to live the life hereafter or the "Life indeed" even in their earthly environment. But no life according to the Qur'an is worthy of the name, if it does not, in one form or another, partake of this aim in life, and that is not possible unless one develops, in some degree or other, the sense of God that we have spoken of, a sense which grows and thrives in inverse proportion to the eli-

53. *Hisn-i-Hisin.*

54. *Fatahul Ghaib* by Shaikh Abd al Qadar Jilani.

mination or subjugation of the sense of "self" with which man is usually obsessed.

Total elimination of the sense of self is not, however, the standard of conduct recommended by the Qur'an for the generality of mankind. "That is the urge of a certain type of mind which seeks for its bliss "absorption in God" or "Fana fillah", to use a sufi term. No one may deny one the privilege of such an urge. But the experience, mystic as it must be, is of value to society only to the extent it transmutes itself into an idea such as may have a social or spiritual value for mankind. What the Qur'an desires man to achieve is not the total forgetfulness of his sense of the self but a happy blending of it with the sense of God in him, or the keeping of an even balance between the two. That is 'Taqwa' or balanced life. It is that which characterizes the mind Al-Qur'an builds, a mind which looks upon life as a gift from God, as a trust and a sacred privilege to be lived in the presence of the "Divine Countenance," and guided by the light emanating therefrom, indeed transformed into light, so that one might be an example and guide to those struggling in darkness.

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SOURCE MATERIAL: *AL-QUR'AN*

March of Life Here and Hereafter.

He it is who hath formed you by successive stages.
(Q. 71:13)

And it is he who hath created man of water.
(Q. 25:56)

And God hath caused you to spring forth from the earth like a plant.

Hereafter will be turn you back into it again, and will bring you forth anew. (Q. 71:16-17)

"From it (earth) have we created you, and unto it will we return you, and out of it will we bring you forth a second time." (Q. 20:55)

"Now of fine clay have we created man :
 Then we placed him, a moist germ, in a safe abode ;
 Then made we the moist germ a clot of blood :
 Then made the clotted blood into a piece of flesh ;
 Then made the piece of flesh into bones ;
 And we clothed the bones with flesh ;
 Then brought forth man of yet another make —
 Blessed therefore be God, the most excellent of Makers !
 Then after this ye shall surely die :
 Then shall ye be waked up on the day of Resurrection." (Q. 23:12-16)

This is He who knoweth the unseen and the seen ;
 the Mighty, the Merciful,

Who hath made everything which he hath created
 in perfect form ; and began the creation of man with
 clay ;

Then ordained his progeny from germs of life,
 from sorry water :

Then shaped him, and breathed of His Spirit
 into him, and gave you hearing and seeing and hearts :
 what little thanks do ye return ! (Q. 32:5-9)

"Thinketh man that he is to be left to drift ?
 Was he not a mere embryo in the seminal elements ?
 Then he became a clot ; then (Allah) shaped and
 fashioned
 And made of him a pair, male and female.

Is not He able to bring the dead to life ?"
 (Q. 75:36-40)

What think ye of (the seed, the germ of life)
 that ye spill ?—

Is it ye who create it ? or are we its creator ?

It is we who have decreed that death should be among
 you ;

Yet are we not thereby hindered from replacing you with others, your likes, or from producing you again in a form which ye know not!

Ye have known the first creation: will ye not then reflect? (Q. 56:58-61)

Your creation and resurrection are but a single soul. (Q. 31:27)

It needs not therefore that I swear by the sunset redness,

And by the night and its gatherings,
And by the moon when at her full,
That from state to state shall he be surely carried onward. (Q. 84-19)

The Life Hereafter:—

The life of this world is but a play and disport: but of the abode of the Hereafter is Life Indeed! Would that they knew this! (Q. 29:64)

Whoso will choose the harvest field of the life to come, to him will we give increase even in this life's harvest field: and whoso chooseth the harvest field of this life, thereof will we give him: but no portion shall there be for him in the life to come.

The Life Hereafter is dictated by the Life Here:—

And every man's doings have we fastened about his neck: and on the day of resurrection will we bring forth to him a book which shall be proffered to him wide open:

—"Read thy Book: there needeth none but thine own soul to make out an account against thee this day."
(Q. 17: 13-14)

—On the day when we will summon all men with their leaders, they whose book shall be given into their right hand, shall read their book, and not be treated in the least unjustly. (Q. 17:73)

Say: God giveth you life, then causeth you to die: then will He assemble you on the day of resurrection: there is no doubt of it: but most men have not this knowledge.

And God's is the kingdom of the Heavens and of the Earth; and on the day when the Hour shall arrive, on that day shall the despisers rue.

And thou shalt see every people kneeling: to its own book shall every people be summoned:—"This day shall ye be repaid as ye have wrought. This our Book will speak of you with truth: therein have we written down whatever ye have done."

As to those who have believed and wrought righteously, into his mercy shall their Lord cause them to enter. This shall be undoubted bliss!

But as to those others who did not believe—"Were not my signs recited to you? But ye proudly scorned them, and became a sinful people."

And when it was said: "Verily the Promise of God is truth; and as to Hour, there is no doubt of it;" ye said: "We know not what the hour is—we conceive it a mere conceit,—we have no assurance of it."

And the evils they have wrought shall rise up into their view, and that at which they mocked shall bemock them in on every side. (Q. 45: 26-32)

When The Earth with her quaking shall quake
And the Earth shall cast forth her burdens,
And man shall say, What aileth her?

On that day shall she tell out her tidings,
Because thy Lord shall have inspired her.

On that day shall men come forward in throngs
to behold their works,

And whosoever shall have wrought an atom's
weight of good shall behold it.

And whosoever shall have wrought an atom's
weight of evil shall behold it. (Q. 82: 1-5)

When the Heaven shall cleave asunder,
And when the stars shall disperse,

And when the seas shall be commingled,
 And when the graves shall be turned upside down,
 Each soul shall recognise its earliest and its
 latest actions. (Q. 99:-1-8)

On that day ye shall be brought before Him :
 none of your hidden deeds shall remain hidden :

And he who shall have his book given to him in
 his right hand, will say to his friends, "Take ye it ;
 read ye my book ;

I never thought that to this my reckoning I should
 come." (Q. 69: 18: 18-20)

Couldst thou but see when the guilty shall droop
 their heads before their Lord, and cry, "O our Lord !
 we have seen and we have heard : return us then to
 life : we will do that which is right. Verily we now
 believe firmly !" (Q. 32:12)

And every one shall receive as he shall have
 wrought, for well knoweth He men's actions. (Q. 39:70)

Hearken then to your Lord ere the day come,
 which none can put back when God doth ordain its
 coming. No place of refuge for you on that day ! no
 denying your own works ! (42:45)

Nature of Recompense :—

Whosoever will come with a good deed, for him
 there shall be the like of it tenfold, while whosoever
 will come with an evil deed shall be recompensed with
 only the like of it, and they shall not be treated
 unjustly. (Q. 6:161)

God truly will not wrong any one of the weight of
 a mote ; and if there be any good deed, He will repay
 it doubly ; and from His presence shall be given a great
 recompense. (Q. 4:44)

*Condition of Life in Heaven and Hell**Figurative Interpretation :*

On that day thou shalt see the impious alarmed at their own works, and the consequence thereof shall fall upon them: but they who believe and do the things that are right, shall dwell in the meadows of paradise: whatever they shall desire awaiteth them with their Lord. This, the greatest boon. (Q. 42:21)

A similitude of the Garden which is promised to the God-fearing! Therein are rivers of water, which corrupt not: rivers of milk, whose taste changeth not: and rivers of wine, delicious to those who quaff it; And rivers of honey clarified: and therein are all kinds of fruit for them and protection from their Lord! Is this like the lot of those who must dwell for ever in the Fire and shall have draughts of boiling water forced on them which will rend their bowels asunder?

(Q. 47:16-17)

And who shall teach thee what the consuming Fire is?

It is God's kindled fire,

Which shall mount above the hearts,

(Q. 104:5-7)

Heaven and Hell begin in this life:—

But as for those who grossly sin, their abode shall be the Fire: so oft as they shall desire to escape out of it, back shall they be turned into it. And it shall be said to them, Taste ye the chastisement of the Fire, which ye treated as a lie.

And we will surely cause them to taste a chastisement yet nearer at hand, before the greater chastisement, that haply they may turn to us in penitence.

(Q. 32:21-22)

No one is there of you who shall not go down unto

it. This is a settled decree with thy Lord—

Then will we deliver those who were God-fearing,
and the wicked we leave in it on their knees.

(Q. 19:72-73)

But as for those who say, "Our Lord is God ; "and who go straight to Him, the angels shall descend to them and say, "Fear ye not, neither be ye grieved, but rejoice ye in the paradise which ye have been promised.

We are your guardians in this life and in the next: yours' therein shall be your souls' desire, and yours' therein whatever ye shall ask for,—The hospitality of a Gracious, a Merciful one." (41:30-32)

Oh, thou which art at rest,
Return to thy Lord, Pleased, and pleasing him :
Enter thou among my servants,
And enter thou my Paradise. (Q. 89: 26-30)

Extent of Heaven and Hell :

And vie one with another for forgiveness from your Lord and for a Paradise, vast as the Heavens and the Earth, prepared for the God-fearing. (Q. 3: 127)

Life in Hell not Eternal :

When that day shall come, no one shall speak a word but by His leave, and some shall feel wretched and others happy.

And as for the wretched their place the Fire !
therein shall they sigh and bemoan —

Therein shall they abide while the Heavens and the Earth last, unless thy Lord shall will it otherwise ;
verily thy Lord doth what He chooseth.

And as for the happy ones—their place the Garden !
therein shall they abide while the Heavens and the Earth endure, with whatever imperishable boon thy Lord may please to add. (Q. 11:107-110)

Surely Hell lies in wait,

The home of transgressors,
To stay therein for certain terms. (Q. 78: 21-23)

Progress in Next Life :—

O, Believers ! turn to God with the turning of true penitence ; haply your Lord will cancel your evil deeds, and will bring you into the gardens neath which the rivers flow, on the day when God will not shame the Prophet, nor those who have shared his faith : their light shall run before them, and on their right hands ! they shall say, "Lord perfect our light, and pardon us : for thou hast power over all things."

SAY : O my servants who have transgressed to your own hurt, despair not of God's mercy, for all sins doth God forgive. Gracious, Merciful is He !

(Q. 39:54)

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SOURCE MATERIAL : *AL-HADITH*

Life in Hell not eternal :—

1. "Allah will then say : The angels and the prophet and the faithful, they all have interceded for the sinners (who had done some good) and now there remains none to intercede for the rest except the most merciful of all merciful ones. So, He will, in his hand, bring out from fire a people who never worked any good."

(Muslim : Kitab al-Jannat Wa Sifatihi)

2. "Surely a day will come over Hell, when it will be like a field of corn that has dried up after flourishing for a while." (Kanzul-Ummal)

3. "Surely a day will come over Hell when there shall no be a single human being in it."

(Kanzul-Ummal)

4. "When a period will pass over the inmates of Hell, the Lord Compassionate will put his foot on it and Hell will break down and disappear."

(Muslim : Kitab al-Jannat Wa sifatih)

5. "Hell will always desire more and more sinners to pour in ; but a time will come when God the Almighty will thrust his foot into it to see if that could not satisfy it. When Lo ! Hell will cry out "Enough, enough ! I seek refuge in Thy might and in Thy compassion," and will cease to exist. Heaven will always have a vast unoccupied space. God will people it by a new type of people who will thereafter dwell therein.

(Bukhari : Kitab al-Tawhid)

6. Narrates Abu Huraira : Said the Prophet : "When the believers will be released from the Fire (Hell), they will be detained at the bridge lying between Hell and Heaven, so that such of them as had wronged others in this world might get reconciled with those wronged. Thus rendered clean, they will be allowed to enter Heaven. By Him in whose hands is held the life of Muhammad, (I say), every one of them will know the exact station he is to occupy in Heaven."

(Taisir ul Usul)

March forward even for sinners:—

7. Narrates Ibn Masud : The prophet spoke once of the person who will be the last to enter Heaven. He said : "A person just released from Hell, with his face betraying the effect of the ordeal of fire, will walk out with slow steps for a little while, and then turning back (towards Hell) will exclaim : "All Glory to God who has released me from thy hold. He has granted me a boon, the like of which was never given to any one else." Through the grace of God, a tree will spring up near him at the moment, and the man will cry out : "O God, pray let me sit underneath this tree and have

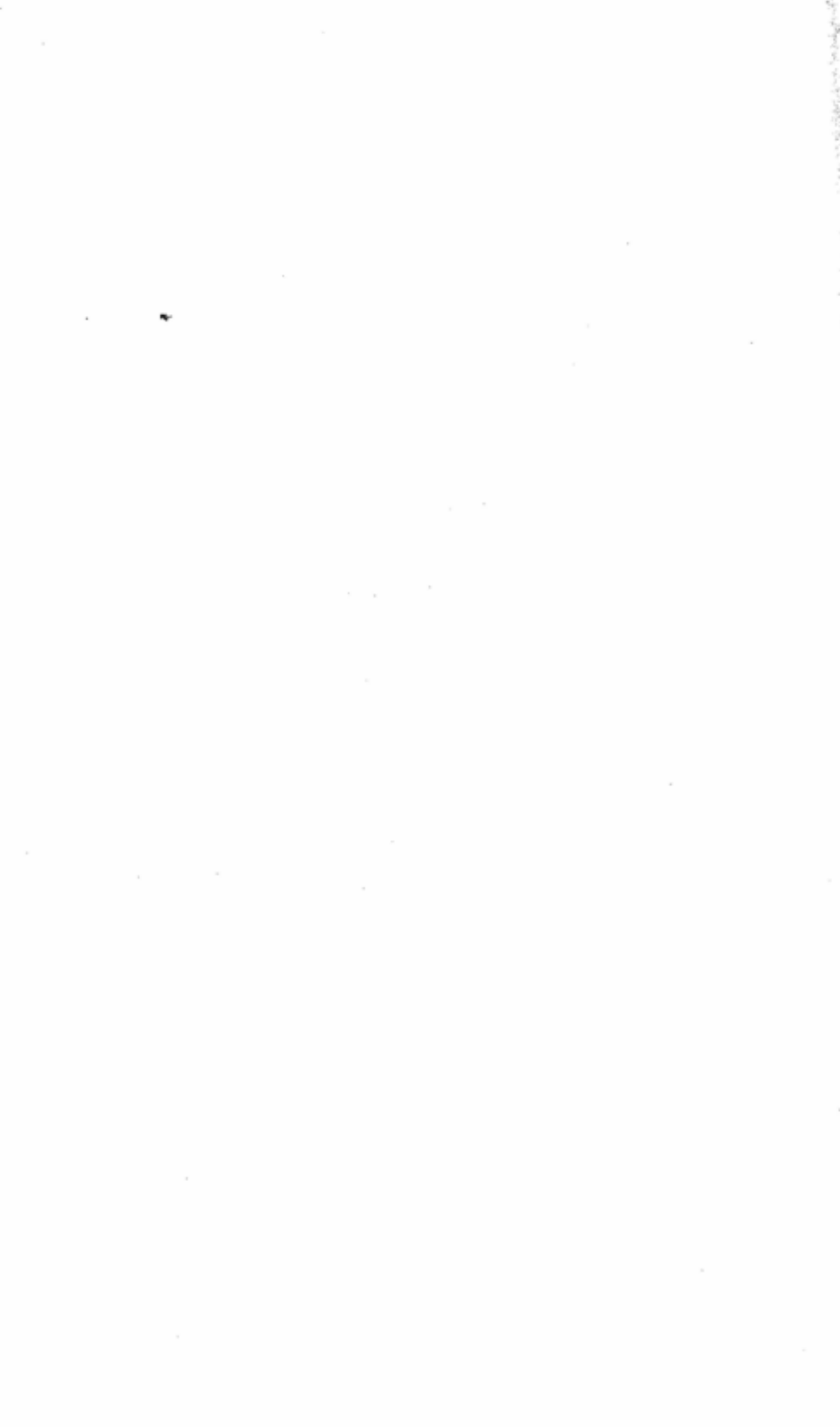
some cool water." God will then say: "O son of Adan! should I grant you this, you will ask for something further." The man will reply: "I will not ask for anything further." God, knowing though that this man will not rest content, will grant his request. The moment the man gets under the tree, another tree will spring up at a little distance, one better than the first. The man will cry out: "O God! pray let me sit under this other tree. I will never ask for anything further." God will then say: "You had just promised not to ask for anything further. Should I grant this too to you, you will ask for something better." The man will supplicate: "I now promise definitely that I should not ask for anything further." God will then order that he be taken to the other trees. Sitting underneath this tree, the man will drink the cool water lying there. At this moment, he will notice yet another tree sprung up, and this at the very entrance to Heaven. This will be pleasanter to look at than the other two. The man will cry out: "O God! Betake me to this tree so that I might enjoy its shade and the cool water under it." God knows that the man, even this time, will not remain contented; and yet graciously will grant him his request. On reaching it, his ears will catch the pleasing voices of the inmates of Heaven. Growing very restive, he will implore: "O my Providence! get me into Heaven!" God will then address him: "How long wilt thou continue to make requests? Wilt you feel satisfied if I grant thee a Heaven twice as vast as two worlds?" Getting excited, the man will rejoin: "God of all the worlds! Art thou joking at me?"

Ibn Masud, having proceeded so far smiled. Looking around, he asked his hearers: "Why don't you ask me why I have smiled?" His hearers exclaimed: "Say you yourself why you smiled." Ibn Masud replied: "So had the prophet smiled at this stage in his narration, and when it was asked of him why he had done so, the prophet had replied: I did it because God

himself would smile at such a questioning of the man, and would say : "I did not joke at you ! I have the power to do as I will." (Muslim).

Part 2

BELIEVE AND WORK — Righteous Action



Chapter 6

FREEDOM OF ACTION: *WILL OF GOD*

IN the foregoing pages an attempt has been made to present the leading beliefs in Islam and emphasise the postulate of the Qur'an that every belief, if sincerely entertained, must express itself in action appropriate to it. Three questions pose themselves in this connection. Is man, under Islam, free to will and act? What equipment does it suggest for him as an aid to righteous action? And what exactly makes an action righteous? We shall take these up seriatim for consideration. In this chapter, we confine ourselves to the first.

Is man free to will and free to act? Expressions confront us at every turn in the Qur'an proclaiming that nothing happens except as God wills. And yet responsibility is attached to man's action, and hopes of reward and fears of punishment are held out. And then, as against this, stand out a host of verses calling upon man to exert his mind and choose between right and wrong; and he is told :

"God does not change the condition of a people unless they first change that which is in their hearts."¹

Man shall have nothing but what he strives for.²

And whatever suffering ye suffer, it is what your hands have wrought.³

What is one to make of these apparent contrarieties crossing and recrossing each other? Is man after all free to will and act or not free at all? Is there a way out? Such were the questionings which in the early centuries of Islam divided the Islamic society

1. Q. 13:12. 2. Q. 53:40. 3. Q. 42:29.

broadly into two warring camps—one called *Qadriyah* or those who believed in the freedom of will, and the other *Jabriyah* or those who believed in pre-determination or absolute divine control and direction of human action.

Although this controversy reached its climax in the days of the Abbasids, the doctrine of pre-determination had already received during the preceding Ummayyid Khilafat such firm fixity in the Muslim religious thought that no other view had, in the circumstances of the times, the slightest chance to dislodge it. At best, it could be disturbed as was done under the impact of foreign strains; but it could not be supplanted. The determinist outlook not merely triumphed in the conflict, but has ever since clung to the Muslim mind and robbed the Qur'an of the corrective it had offered to this aeons' old notion prevailing in some form or other in the East. No wonder then that non-Muslim European critics have at times delivered sweeping judgments on Islam. They have called the creed of the Qur'an "devoid of love," and its God a "pitiless tyrant, a tremendous autocrat, an uncontrolled and unsympathising Power."⁴ Take a few instances:

Says Palgrave:

"No superiority, no distinction, no pre-eminence can be lawfully claimed in Islam by one creature over another in the utter equalisation of their unexceptional servitude and abasement. All are alike tools of one solitary Force, which employs them to crush or to benefit, to truth or error, to honour or shame, to happiness or misery, quite independently of their individual fitness, deserts or advantage, and simply because He wills it and as He wills it."⁵

Observes Sir William Muir:

"In Islam the relation of Allah to the world is such that

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4. Narrative of a year's journey through Central and Eastern Arabia by W. G. Palgrave, Vol. I, P. 367.
 5. *Ibid.*, P. 366.

not only all free will but all freedom in the exercise of the intellect is preposterous. God is so great and the character of His greatness is so pantheistically absolute that there is no room for the human. All good and all evil come directly from Allah. Hope perishes under the weight of His iron bondage and pessimism becomes the popular philosophy."⁶

Says Clarke :

"Islam saw God but not man ; saw the claims of Deity, but not the rights of humanity, saw authority but failed to see freedom, therefore hardened into despotism, stiffened into formalism, sank into death."⁷

Criticism of the Qur'an of the type disclosed here may be unpalatable to a Muslim, but he has to thank himself for it. The initial responsibility for it belongs to the doctors of Muslim theology in the Middle Ages and to their successors as well, who through an inept approach to the Quranic concept of the "Will of God"—the abiding basis for right human activity—have kept the meaning and purpose of the Qur'an concealed from the mind of man, giving thereby a handle to wilful critics to read rank fatalism in Islam. Sir William Muir and the other writers quoted above would not go behind the interpretation of the mediaeval Muslim theologians on whom they depended entirely for the meaning of the Qur'an and make a direct approach to the Qur'an and apply the 'scientific method' to ascertain from the Qur'an itself what its terms such as the "Will of God" and "Divine Decrees" actually meant. Indeed, they could have turned to the life of the Prophet himself and sought an answer, as another student of the subject, Prof. Ardaser Sorabjee N. Wadia, a Zoroastrian by faith, tried to do in his "*Message of Mohammed*." Dealing with the charge of fatalism against Islam, the

6. Quoted by S. N. Wadia in his work, *The Message of Mohammed*, Dent & Sons, Limited, London and Toronto, 1923, P. 44.

7. *Ibid.*, 44.

Professor observes :

"If it were so, it is obvious that nowhere would we, or ought we to find a better exemplification of this creed of fatalism than in the life and activities of one who originated and propounded it—namely, of Mohammed himself. Yet, what do we find in the recorded events of Mohammed's life? A buoyant childhood : an active boyhood ; an enterprising period of youth, during which he took part in two commercial ventures necessitating long wearisome journeys of months through the dreary, scorching deserts, a restless manhood given wholly to thinking out the deepest problems of life and destiny, involving an endless travail of the soul, and a protracted middle-age which commenced in comparative calm and ended in perhaps the most strenuous period of his life made up of battles, sieges and expeditions. Such a long and vigorous career, crossed and recrossed by the varied moods and tricks of fortune, does not look like one given to mere passive acceptance of things as they are or to sheer indolent acquiescence in events as they happen, which Fatalism rightly so called, presupposes and enforces. Rather, it has the appearance, of a career which believes in actively and courageously working out solely and remaining absolutely resigned to the inscrutable will of God."⁸

Among the factors responsible for the shroud that has rested on the Qur'an, the most striking is the dismal failure on the part of our early doctors of religion who laid the foundations of the mediaeval Islam which we have inherited to notice what was so clear that the essential purpose of the Qur'an was to explain and interpret to man the *Sunnat Allah* ⁹ or the ways of Allah, and that for that purpose, it followed a method and a style of its own in the presentation of its subject and employed a diction specifically classified into *Muhkamat* or words to be taken in the literal sense and *Mutashabihat* or what were to be conceived figuratively.¹⁰ What absorbed the primary attention of these early theologians, however, was not this *Sunnat* of Allah but another *Sunnat*, the *Sunnat* of the Muslim Arab

8. *The Message of Mohammad*, pp. 50-51.

9. Q. 31:45. 10. Q. 3:5.

community, their customs and usages, modelled on what they believed to be the practice of the Prophet, years after the Prophet had passed away—customs and usages of the Arabs codified under several systems of *fiqh*, covering every detail of life. So obsessed were they with this task that they could not give adequate attention to the study and exposition of the *Sunnat Allah* or *Fitrat Allah* or *Khalq Allah* which indeed, according to the Qur'an, was the "right religion." For, says the Qur'an :

"Turn steadfastly to the way of devotion (*Din*),—the way of Allah, (*Fitrat Allah*)—for which He hath fitted man in his nature. There is no altering of the way framed of Allah (*Khalq Allah*). That is the right way but most people know it not."¹¹

Note that the terms *Fitrat Allah* and *Khalq Allah* are used precisely in the same sense as *Sunnat Allah* or way or course or custom of Allah in 35: 41-42—"Ye shall not find any change in the *Sunnat Allah*; ye shall not find any variableness in the *Sunnat Allah*." This *Sunnat*, this course is fixed by Allah to maintain order and harmony in life of not only the entire universe, but of every object of creation; and the Qur'an takes care to emphasise that this *Sunnat* or *Khalq Allah* is indeed *Khalq-ar-Rahman* or devised not by any "uncontrolled and unsympathising Power" or a "pitiless tyrant" but by "One Beneficent"¹² who however transcendent is yet "nearer man than his jugular vein,"¹³ and "responds to the call of every one who calls Him."¹⁴ It is this *Sunnat* which is the "Will of God," and man has but to conform to it for a life of peace and order.

As we have pointed out above, the Qur'an follows a method of its own to explain the *Sunnat* of Allah, and employs a diction appropriate to it. *Fadhakkir bil Qur'an* "Explain the Qur'an in the manner of the Qur'an" is the directive the Book itself gives¹⁵. The

11. Q. 30:29.

12. Q. 67:3.

13. Q. 50:15

14. Q. 2:182.

15. Q. 50:45

directive was evidently necessitated by the fact that the Qur'an had primarily to be explained to the unlettered Arabs of the Prophet's time among whom and in whose language and idiom it was delivered, and that it had to be explained to them in a manner helpful to a clear grasp of its meaning. States the Qur'an :

"He it is who hath sent to the unlettered folk an apostle from among themselves to rehearse His signs to them and purify them, and to impart to them a knowledge of the *Kitab* and *Hikmah*, the Book and the wisdom; for aforetime they were in manifest error."¹⁶

The directive here is to teach or explain the *Kitab*, the Book or the revelations it contains together with the *Hikmah* or the wisdom or purpose underlying them. And this is to be done in a special manner—the manner of the Qur'an. But this manner was never a subject of serious study in any Muslim theological seminar. On the other hand, the early theologians either went by the literal meaning of the word, or were engrossed in applying to the interpretation of the Quranic terms, particularly the *mutashabihat*, the formulae of the scholastic philosophy of Greece after the example of the early Christian theologians, as well as, the dialectic poses which they themselves developed in the name of '*Ilam al kalam* or dialectic. Indeed, some of them with a mystic bent of mind read strange esoteric meaning into them impelled no doubt by the notion that *hikmah* in the phrase *Kitab wal hikmah* posited an "inner meaning" for the words of the Qur'an, and that this was clothed especially in the *mutashabihat*. That such could not be the normal connotation of the term *Hikmah* is endorsed by the verse:

"Certainly we sent apostles with clear proofs, and sent down them *Kitab wal Mizan*, the Book and the balance, that men may observe equipoise."¹⁷

Here the word '*Mizan*' or 'balance' stands in the same relation to the word '*Kitab*' or 'Book' in the

16. Q. 62 : 2. 17. Q. 57:25

phrase *Kitab wal Mizan* as *Hikmah* in the phrase *Kitab wal Hikmah*, and must be taken to be synonymous with it in import. *Hikmah* is indeed the *Mizan*, the rational basis on which the *Kitab*, the Revelation, is to rest, and help mankind to "observe equipoise" or live a balanced life. Few paused to consider that the *mutashabihat* even as the *muhkamats* were to be explained primarily to the unlettered folk for whom and among whom and in whose language the revelations were delivered, and that consequently these too were meant to be comprehensible to them in the first instance. A figure of speech, if it has any purpose to serve, has but to present in a flash what otherwise might necessitate a tedious expression, or to reinforce graphically what has been stated in plain words, and hence the *mutashabihat*, the figurative language, should not have been allowed to mean anything abnormally different from what had been conveyed in the *Muhkamats* or plain words.

The Qur'an is essentially a moral code of conduct as it expressly claims to be,¹⁸ and as such its method of appeal is necessarily direct. Expressions such as "See things for yourselves and reflect", "travel in the land and see for yourselves the consequences to those who have rejected,"¹⁹ "here are signs for men of understanding",²⁰ "for folk who reflect",²¹ repeating themselves tirelessly at every turn, constitute the manner of that appeal. The method is one of observation and analogy within the easy reach of man in every stage of intellectual development. The sense of appreciation may of course vary with every stage of intellect: but the common feature is its easy intelligibility.

The basic concept of life which the Qur'an furnishes is that the entire world of creation and everything contained therein is sustained by certain definite laws inherent in each object and in harmony with each

18. Q. 2:1 19. Q. 6:11 20. Q. 3:187 21. Q. 13:3

other, that these laws of nature, the *Sunnat Allah*, are necessarily unalterable and that man's joy in life should lie in co-operating with these laws and imitating them in his own activity, assisted by the "balance set in his nature."²² These laws constitute the "Will of God", in the phraseology of the Qur'an, and man is but to try to the best of his ability to conform to them for a life of peace and order. This, to use the Quranic expression, is "to surrender to His Will."²³

To bring this fundamental point home, the Qur'an repeatedly draws attention to the indifference of man to see the things which he can clearly see for himself and reflect. The vast panorama of nature, the beautiful constellations moving in the heavens, giving to earth its alternation of day and night, its light and darkness, the soaring clouds that send down rain from the sky to water the earth, the tiny seed that man sows therein shooting out a luxuriant crop affording him his subsistence, the 'moist germ' out of which he himself grows into being, and a host of similar familiar objects must suggest to him that some "benevolent law" or purpose—*Khalq ar Rahman*—holds together all that he sees or feels through his senses. It emphasises that "the heavens and the earth and whatsoever is between them are not created in sport,"²⁴ but for a serious end, that each object of creation is made subject to the laws intrinsic to its nature in order that it might fulfil its function, and that man "fitted by nature with a sense of balance and discrimination"²⁵ is to conduct himself in accordance with the laws of his own being, and in harmony with the laws governing the rest of creation. "That is the right religion" or path of devotion to the ways of Allah, says the Qur'an, and for which "man hath been fitted by his nature," but its regret is that man hath proved "unjust", "indifferent", and "hath corrupted the world."²⁶

22. Q. 91 : 7 23. Q. 2 : 130 24. Q. 21 : 16; 44 : 38-39

25. Q. 91 : 7 26. Q. 33 : 72; 30 : 40.

So, whenever the *Qur'an* asserts that nothing happens against the Will of God, it only means that the laws inherent in the object concerned are at work and have their inevitable course and duration. Man's role on earth is to understand these laws and conform to them; and whenever he neglects to understand and conform to them, the consequence will naturally prove harmful to him. The Quranic way of expressing this is: "We have willed it so." In other words: a law must have its course: a cause must produce its effect. That is the scheme of life divinely devised or determined and man is not free to alter that scheme, the "ways of God". This is the main domain of life where man has but to conform or surrender to the Will of God or the laws of life which sustain it, if he chooses to profit by them of his own free will.

The *Qur'an* sometimes speaks of men who refuse to follow the right course and persist in that attitude, and have grown hardened therein. The Book refers to them in this wise: "They have minds, but reflect not; they have eyes, but they see not; they have ears, but hear not."²⁷ Here again the reference is to the neglect-determined neglect—of the "balance set in the nature of man." The law of life will then have its course: "We have sealed their minds, their ears, their eyes."²⁸ That is the Quranic style of expressing the consequence.

Sometimes the *Qur'an* speaks of men who in their pursuit of a wrong course or in the course of their neglect of some law of life, pause and foresee the nature of the consequence to follow and wish to retrace their steps or resolve to conform to the law which they have so far neglected. Then that law or force so courted acts in them with a revived vitality to their advantage. Fate or the impending consequence is altered. The process is one of repentance and forgiveness. "He guideth to Himself him who turneth to Him",²⁹ or to

27. Q. 7:178 28. Q. 2:6 29. Q. 13:27

the laws of life, to God's ways. "Whosoever committeth a sin, committeth it to his own hurt,"³⁰ stresses the Qur'an, but adds characteristically: "Your Lord hath prescribed for himself a law of mercy, so that if any one of you commit a sin through ignorance and afterwards turn and amend, He surely will be Gracious, Merciful."³¹ "If man but takes one step towards God," adds the Prophet, "God takes two to meet him."³²

The point to note here is that the initiative for movement and reform should lie with man. That is the law—His Will. So it is with individuals, and so with nations. "God doth not change the condition of a people unless they change that which is in their hearts."³³

That such is the meaning or import of the Quranic expressions: "We have willed: We have decreed," and so forth with reference to man's freedom to will and act, is unmistakably clear from the following verses which are couched in the plainest language, the *Muhkamat*, which are to be taken in the literal sense.

"Those who strive in our way, we shall show them the way."³⁴

"Whosoever followeth the right course, it is only for the good of his own soul that he doth so; and whosoever followeth the wrong course doth so to its own hurt. No soul charged with its own responsibility shall bear another's responsibility."³⁵

"I will not suffer the work of any among you that worketh whether male or female, to be lost."³⁶

"By the soul and Him who balanced it and infused into the same the sense of discrimination and the power of choosing between the wrong and the right, happy is he

30. Q. 4 : 111. 31. Q. 6 : 54 32. Bukhari : *Kitab al Tawhid*.

33. Q. 13:12 34. Q. 29:69 35. Q. 17:16 36. Q. 3:193

who keepeth it pure and unhappy is he who corrupteth it.”³⁷

It must be clear by now, that the Qur'an places no restrictions on man's movement either in thought or knowledge or action save those which should suggest themselves to him through a proper exercise of what the Qur'an calls the “sense of balance set in the nature of man.” The proviso is of primary importance. One must know one's limits and at the same time appreciate the appropriateness of a move in a given situation. That is the way to exercise the balance properly. “O Allah: I seek refuge from every desire that cannot be sated and from that prayer that thou may'st not entertain,”³⁸ is the caution which the Prophet himself observed. This sense of balance or the law of harmony which, as the Qur'an proclaims, binds and permeates the entire universe, is in the sphere of human life the supreme moral law which through man's own free will must permeate all his activity, both in relation to himself and in relation to his external world, and guide his energies harmoniously to the highest aim. That is the way to “believe and work righteously.”

The “sense of balance” is the unerring force in man to which all his activity is to be referred. It should suggest to him that even as he is to conform to the general laws of nature for a life of order, even so, he is to respect the laws of life that work in his very soul to give inward peace. “There are signs even in your soul.”³⁹ They too constitute “the will of God” and one is to conform to them also. Conformity implies exertion, and exertion one has to bear if he chooses to move forward from state to state towards perfection as is the purpose underlying his being.⁴⁰

37. Q. 91:7-10.

38. *Concept of Society in Islam* by Syed Abdul Lateef, Hyderabad-Dn. p. 69, 1937.

39. Q. 51. 21 40. Q. 84: 19.

The truth is brought home by a reference to the process of evolution at work in nature. The seed sown in the earth struggles hard and long against resistance of diverse sorts before it appears in the form of a delicious fruit. Even the moist germ which gets into the womb of a prospective mother, what travails does it not pass through before it emerges into the human form ! Similarly, observes the Qur'an, man's movement towards moral and spiritual perfection is fraught with inevitable discomfort on the way. The discomfort is to test him and to press him into a better mould: "We try you with evil and with good, by way of an ordeal."⁴¹ That is the law of existence, His Sunnat, His habit or practice, and one has to bear it or "surrender to it." That is in man's own interest. It will elevate him. To question it is to deny oneself the opportunity of advance.

In the failure to invoke his sense of balance and view life's experience in proper perspective, lie the roots of what man calls "misery". This weakness is common to most people ; for, deep in the heart of man there dwells a restless thirst for bliss and he expects the world to quench it. Man makes his will the measure of his rights ; but the world takes its own course. Disappointment follows, and he "rails at God and Fate."

"The world's course proves the terms
On which man wins content;
Reason the proof confirms—
We spurn it, and invent

A false course for the world, and for ourselves, false powers.

"Riches we wish to get,
Yet remain spendthrifts still;
We would have health, and yet
Still use our bodies ill;

Bafflers of our own prayers, from youth to life's last scenes.

"We would have inward peace,

⁴¹. Q. 2 : 150-151

Yet will not look within;
 We would have misery cease,
 Yet will not cease from sin;
 We want all pleasant ends, but will not use harsh means.

"We do not what we ought,
 What we ought not, we do,
 And lean upon the thought;
 That chance will bring us through;
 But our own acts, for good or ill, are mightier powers."⁴²

—*Empedocles on Etna.*

The world's course which Empedocles speaks of here is the law of life, the way of God or His *Sunnat*, as the Qur'an styles it. It proves the terms on which man wins content. Reason confirms the proof. But man spurns it and invents for himself a false course. He makes a fool of himself—"A fool of his own woe". Folly brings its own suffering. That is fate, the law of life, the decree of God, *Taqdir*. "Whatever suffering ye suffer," points out the Qur'an, it "is what your own hands have wrought."⁴³

Fate or *Taqdir* is used in the Qur'an in three broad senses. Firstly, there is the field of what we may term the Divine initiative or of the operation of the laws of Nature—*Fitrat Allah* or *Khalq Allah* or *Sunnat Allah*. They are signs of a plan of existence necessarily conceived in advance or pre-determined even as every human plan is pre-determined before it is put into action, with this difference that whereas man's knowledge of the nature of things entering his plan being limited, he changes it as experience warrants him, whereas God's knowledge of everything being perfect, occasion cannot arise to alter the course He adopts. God does not alter his ways or the laws of nature or the fundamental bases of life, of its ebbs and flows. They

42. Arnold : *Dramatic and later Poems*, London, Macmillan & Co. 1895, p. 142. 43. Q. 42 : 29

form the exclusive domain of divinity, and man as man has no valid ground to question them, because he cannot grasp in right perspective the working of these laws or the reality about them. He is simply to believe that they are but *Khalq-ar-Rahman* or the "laws devised by God, the Lord of Compassion", and must necessarily be good. His responsibility lies only in the nature of the use he makes of these laws. Every reaction to them is *Taqdir*.

Secondly, there is the field of human initiative. "Whosoever followeth the right course, he doth so for the good of his own soul, and whosoever followeth the wrong course doth so to its own hurt."⁴⁴ "Our own acts" for good or ill, are mightier powers. That too is *Taqdir*: Man here is the maker of his own fate. The balance set in the nature of man or the sense of discrimination ingrained in him must, in all circumstances, be the final guide in distinguishing between what he ought and what he ought not to do. The *Qur'an* has laid down certain definite injunctions touching human conduct, as may easily be endorsed by reason and experience. They denote certain principles of life operating for peace and order, and indicate what one has to avoid in life and what to observe. These directions or commandments reflect the principles of harmony subsisting in the world of nature and for that reason may be taken to signify the Will of God, and one has to conform to them also. Conformity with them and non-conformity produce opposite results. Both are styled *Taqdir*.

And lastly, there is the reaction on our life of the deeds of others. Sometimes they bring us joy. The joy may seem unexpected. But the very talent to feel the joy proceeding from the good deeds of others is the result of a process of righteousness in ourselves. Even that is *Taqdir*. Sometimes the deeds of others bring us

44. Q. 17: 16

pain and suffering :—

“Though of ours no weakness spoil our lot,
Though the non-human powers of nature harm us not,
The ill-deeds of other men make often our life dark.”⁴⁵

—*Empedocles on Etna.*

Taqdir in this context expresses itself in one of two ways. It may be that those who have thus suffered had not in proper time anticipated the rise of evil tendencies in others and exercised proper check on them by every reasonable means open to them or to use the Quranic phrase “did not restrain wrong doing”, or it may be that they knowingly abstained from interference. They have to pay the penalty for the failure to do so. This holds good in domestic as well as national and international life. Much of the suffering in this world, including the suffering wrought by wars, is preventable by people who through indifference or a false sense of tolerance which in certain situations amounts to criminal unconcern with what is going on around them, allow evil to prosper. Suffering is the result, not merely for the wrong doer, but also for those seemingly innocent who have failed to prevent wrong doing. That is the law of life or *Taqdir*. Neglect of duty to check evil in time in others, wherever possible, is in reality participation in the evil.

Here comes in the injunction of the Qur'an, the injunction designated as *Jehad*, another term which, as Kutr already noticed, has come to be an odium among non-Muslim circles not fully conversant with the Quranic connotation of it. The term literally means ‘exertion’ or striving against all that is evil, whether in thought, or feeling or action. That is an essential condition of a peaceful life; so much so, that the highest and the most trying form of it is the *Jehad* against one's own evil ways. To fight evil desires

45. Arnold : *Poems*, p. 144

rising from within and let life run on lines which bring inward peace is by no means an easy affair. Fighting with arms those who are out to disturb the peace of the world or bent on the destruction of the good in life is *Jehad*, as commonly understood; but the *Jehad* with one's own self is indeed a hard task. Hence it is called '*Jehad-e-Akbar*', the greatest of *Jehads*. To abstain from this *Jehad* in one's own personal case is to let the 'Self' disintegrate. Likewise to abstain from remonstrating with the evil around by thought or deed as the case may demand or warrant, is to be a party to the disintegration of corporate happiness for man. The ill-deeds of other men involve us in the result of their ill-deeds whenever we abstain from putting a check on them. The question of one's life getting dark on that account shall not arise as Empedocles fancies it does. It is on the other hand a penalty one has to pay for letting others freely to indulge in evil deeds. Such is the view which the Prophet of Islam takes of this issue. Says he :

"God does not take to task an entire community for the misdeeds of a few of its members till the general public, while possessing the requisite means to put a check on them, continue to look upon them with unconcern."

(Ahmed : Musnad)

There is another side to this very problem. We remonstrate against evil. We exert and do *Jehad* against it. The utmost what one should do is done, and yet evil triumphs bringing suffering with it. Even that is *Taqdir*. But that should not "darken our life" as such a feeling would betray the sense of frustration and defeatism in life. The Qur'an warns us against the growth of that feeling. One is to bear it and turn failure to moral victory. That is righteous action or '*Amal-i-Saleh*.'

"By Time, verily, man's life is at a discount, save of those who have faith, and do the things that be right, and enjoin truth on one another, and enjoin steadfastness."⁴⁶

"We test you with evil and with good, as an ordeal"⁴⁷.

The suffering involved in the upholding of truth is a test, and those who bear the ordeal elevate themselves in the scale of life and enter the ranks of the *Sabirin* or those who endure. The ordeal is implicit in the march onward from state to state towards Reality.

It was in a situation like this, that Christ in the agony of his soul on the night at Gethsemane cried out "O my Father! If it be possible, let this cup pass from me. Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt"⁴⁸—words worthy of a Prince among the *Sabirin*; those who endure steadfastly.

Lastly, when all is said on the subject that what is called *Taqdir* is in some form or other the name for a stage in the process of human activity, the Qur'an reserves to God a realm of activity on which man as man has no meaning to enter—the realm of 'Divine Veto.' However endowed with knowledge, however circumspect, man cannot always be certain of the result he anticipates. A stage does come when all that is humanly possible is done, and yet the result is not as anticipated or to one's liking. In the world of morals and of moral justice, the good intention is what matters and must bring its own satisfaction. That is one's real reward. In the material sphere, the result may not be pleasing at first; but God knows what its final form is to be.

"It may be you dislike a thing which is good for you and it may be you like a thing which is bad for you. Allah knows, ye, ye know not."⁴⁹

"To God belong the secrets of the heavens and the earth. All affairs are referred back to Him; devote thyself then to His service and put thy trust in Him. Thy Lord is not regardless of what ye do."⁵⁰

47. Q. 2:150-151

48. *The New Testament*; St. Matthew : 26:39.

49. Q. 2:213 50. Q. 11:123

The task then before man is to do a thing that be right and leave the rest to god. He has but to conform his ways to the ways of God, his will to the divine will and to bear and endure the ordeals of life with truth and steadfastness. *That is the cardinal message of the Qur'an.*

After all, life on this side of the grave is not the whole of it. The life beyond also matters. It is a continuation of it. "Your creation and resurrection are but a single soul."⁵¹ The result of one's good deeds may not be discernible in this life; but it will be crystal clear in the next. Only, man has to do all that is possible for him to do to live in conformity with the will and ways of God leaving the rest to Him, in fervent love and trust and hope. That is the way to live in Islam. No wonder Goethe exclaimed: "If this be Islam, do we not all live in Islam",⁵² and Carlyle, a soul akin to Goethe, echoed the cry:

"I say, this is the only true morality known. A man is right and invincible, virtuous and on the road towards sure conquest, precisely while he joins to the great Law of the World, in spite of all superficial laws, temporary appearances, profit-and-loss calculations. And his first chance of co-operating with it, or getting into the course of it, is to know with his whole soul that it is, that it is good, and alone good! This is the soul of Islam, and it is probably the soul of Christianity."⁵³

Asks the Qur'an:

"Whither then are ye going?
Verily this is naught but a reminder to all mankind:
To him among you who willeth to walk in a straight path:
But will it, ye shall not, unless as God willeth it, the
Sustainer of the worlds."⁵⁴

How then is one to will as God willeth, or to join to the great Law of the World?

51. Q. 31:27 52. Quoted by Carlyle in 'Heroes and Hero-worship.'

53. Carlyle on 'Heroes and Hero-worship'.

54. Q. 81:26-29.

Chapter 7

THE EQUIPMENT—*KNOWLEDGE*

HOW is the task to be performed? The answer is summed up in a single word—Islam. In a lucid exposition of this term, in essence applicable to all right living, Dr. J. H. Bridges, a positivist, follower of Comte, observes in a discourse delivered as far back as 1879:

The faith of the Mussalman is concentrated in a single word, Islam, devotion, resignation of our own will to the Supreme decree. That word was not limited by Mohammed to his own followers; it was used ungrudgingly of his Judaic and Christian predecessors. There is no fitter word for the religion of the human race. If there is any one word in western language which can translate it fully, it is the word 'religion' itself; and that word needs interpretation for ears untrained in Latin speech. The word Islam unfolds itself for us as for the followers of Mohammad, into the two great and inseparable aspects of life—prayer and work. 'Pray and give alms, said Mohammad, alms-giving in his wide interpretation of it, conceived with admirable wisdom relatively to the simple wants of his time, covering the whole field of doing good to men. 'Pray and work,' said the mediaeval saint; pray as though nothing were to be done by work: work as though nothing were to be gained by prayer.

In different ways and under every possible variety of language and symbol, the same thing is said by every spiritual leader of men in every age and country. I find it in Confucius, the founder of the faith that has kept Chinese Society together for five-and-twenty centuries: I find it in the ancient theocracy of Hindostan. I find it in the monuments of Egypt as their secrets are gradually revealing themselves to modern learning: I read it in the premature effort of Pythagoras, premature, yet profoundly fruitful of momentous result to discipline of life upon a human basis: and last of all, I find it where most men

think a monopoly of such knowledge is to be found, in the Hebrew and Christian Bible.

Islam, then, or in the English tongue, devotion—the devotion of our life to the highest; the bringing of our own will into accord with the supreme will; this is the word that sums up the lives of pious men in every age and every country. They have framed for themselves an ideal, a model, a pattern of what their life should be. They have done their utmost to make that ideal a reality. In other words, they have prayed, and they have worked".¹

How then is one to bring one's own will into accord with the Supreme will? The task is two-fold. It consists, in the first place, of faith or belief; and in the second, of work in consonance therewith. It is not merely 'Pray and Work', which constitutes the function of man. On the other hand, the Quranic commandment is 'Believe and Work righteously.' Prayer in Islam is more an action of the spirit and is covered by the term 'Work.' The Qur'an emphasises that belief by itself is not enough. Indeed belief without work appropriate to it is static. Mere philosophic perception of the essence of divinity or contemplation is barren, if it does not generate volition or give movement to human life in consonance with the qualities or attributes of that essence. Mere spiritual exercises of the kind which certain religious orders practice, or psychic achievements, however interesting, will not rise above their character as but the exercises of the mind, if they do not contribute to and subserve a dynamic moral existence for man. This dynamic morality again is not possible for one who seeks his individual spiritual salvation through the life of the cloister or the cave, or for one who through abnegation of his body fancies his duty to lie in merely nursing his soul. The vicegerency of God on earth is not possible for such types. On the other hand, it is for him who imbues himself with divine attributes to the best of his ability and

1. J. H. Bridges: "Discourses on Positive Religion, London, Reaves and Turner, 1891, pp. 3-4.

manifests them harmoniously in devoted service to himself and his fellow beings.

The attributes of God are various, as are His 'names.' They cannot be numbered, since the fullest comprehension of Divine activity is scarcely possible for man circumscribed as he is by the nature of his being. In the words of the Qur'an, 'to God alone belong all excellent names', for perfection is His only in everything that He attributeth to Himself. With this general attitude towards the conception of Divine attributes, the task before man is to understand the significance to his life of such of them as are specifically brought to mind in the Qur'an. Some of these may fall essentially within the purview of mysticism. But a large majority of them suggestive of His knowledge, and power, and justice, and mercy, and His tender concern for the moral purification of man may easily form the subject of social study. Even these make an imposing list, and should lay bare the futility of encasing the Divine Being in any single virtue or attribute, and incarnating Him. God in Islam is above every attribute and manifests them all in harmonious relation with one another. Man's role is to imitate God in His attributes to the extent his nature helps him.

The persistent call of the Qur'an to man is to ponder on the working of the external world of creation. Therein is at work, it suggests, the eternal principle of harmony and balance to urge on man the need for devoted imitation :

"The Sun and the Moon follow a system,
And the planets and the trees bend in adoration,
And the sky, He hath reared it on high,
And hath set the balance ;
That in the balance ye should not transgress,
But keep it poised and not scant the balance."²

"(Blessed is He) who hath created the seven heavens in layers. Thou canst see no disharmony in the handiwork of the Beneficent God. Then look again. Dost thou see any rifts? Then look again, and yet again; Thy sight

2. Q. 55 : 4-8.

will return unto three thwarted and tired.”³

The essential task of man therefore who aspires to rise in the scale of life and play the role of a vicegerent of God on Earth is to work for harmony not merely in his own life but in that of the world surrounding him. The injunction, “Believe and work righteously,” has therefore different meanings for the different stages in the scale of life to which man has to rise from step to step to qualify himself for his task in high and higher spheres of activity. Those who undertake this great journey in life in the light of the Qur’anic directions are not all grouped together under a single category. The Qur’an speaks of several types of travellers traversing the path of Allah, according to the divine attributes they display in their onward march. It gives each type a distinct name. They are to be known by their action; by their work and not by their mere belief. In fact, not everyone who says he believes in Islam is included in the ranks of the ‘*Mo’minin*,’ or ‘Believers,’ unless his belief is endorsed by appropriate action. These types are severally addressed as *Salehin*, *Muttaqin*, *Muslehin*, *Muslehin*, *Muqsitin*, *Sabirin*, *Shakirin*, *Muhsinin*, *Sadigin*, *Siddigin*, *Shuhada’*, *Awliya*, *Muslimin*, *Muqarribin*, *Ulul-’Ilm*, *Ulul-Albab*, and so on. But this is to be observed that one common purpose binds them all, the essential purpose of displaying in their lives the ‘balance and harmony’ dwelling in the Divine scheme of things.

As against this order favoured of the Qur’an, there stands the opposite order of those upon whom the Qur’an looks with distinct disfavour. They are of those who disturb the ‘Balance and harmony’ that should subsist in life, and ‘create mischief in the earth.’ They too are classified, by the quality of the evil they display in their activity, into several catagories—*Kafirin*, *Mushrikin*, *Zalimin*, *Mufsidin*, *Ghafilin*, *Munafiqin* and so forth.

3. Q. 67 : 3-4.

The types of people favoured of the Qur'an, are by no means exclusive types. They are classified differently simply on the basis of the divine attribute one displays in one's activity more noticeably than any other. Indeed, the larger the number of attributes one displays more or less in equal measure, one blending into every other, the greater one's capacity to discharge his responsibilities as the vicegerent of God on Earth, and the higher his station in life.

"He it is who hath placed you as his vicegerents on Earth and hath raised some of you in rank above others, that he may try you in what he hath given you."⁴

Of all the divine attributes with which man has to endue himself for his task, knowledge commands precedence. Its acquisition is a duty on every man and every woman as laid by the Prophet of Islam :

"Acquire knowledge," said he "It enables the possessor to distinguish right from wrong ; It lights the way to heaven ; it is our companion when friendless : it guides us to happiness, it sustains us in adversity ; it is a weapon against enemies and an ornament among friends. By virtue of it, Allah exalteth nations, and maketh them guides in good pursuits, and giveth them leadership ; so much so, that their footsteps are followed, their deeds are imitated, and their opinions are accepted and held in respect."⁵

The Ulul-'Ilm (those who equip themselves with knowledge or the learned) naturally deserve our primary attention. For, knowledge is the means whereby the qualities, characteristic of the other types, are cultivated.

"God bears witness : There is no God save Him ; and so bear witness the angels ; and so, the men of learning with mental equipoise."⁶

Such is the value which the Qur'an sets on learning. The qualities for instance of *Muttaqin* (those who level

4. Q. 6: 165.

6. Q. 3: 16.

5. Ibn Abd al-Bar: Fadl al-'Ilm.

up their path by removing all ruggedness therefrom or abstain from impurities), *Salehin* (those who follow the right path), *Muslehin* (those who set things right), *Muhsinin* (those who do good deeds in a manner calculated to stimulate the thought of good deeds in others and help them to rectify their errors and do good deeds), *Muflehin* (those who reform or improve the condition of society) *Muqsitin* (those who admit the rights of others and practice equity, and not merely urge them to do good deeds, but also help them in so doing), and *Siddiqin* (those who meticulously adhere to fact and truth), *Muslimin* (those who conform their will to the Will of God or submit)—the qualities distinguishing these and other types are not possible to develop except for one who is endowed with knowledge. Hence it is that the Prophet of Islam lays its acquisition as a primary duty on every man and woman and calls upon the seeker to go to the ends of the Earth in its pursuit, even to China, the then known remotest corner of the world.⁷

But one thing the Qur'an makes perfectly clear. Knowledge does not consist in the mere assemblage in one's memory of ideas or material on this or that subject. That does not constitute acquisition. The Qur'an desires correlation and synthesis helpful to a harmonious grasp of the verities underlying them. The Book therefore insists on reflection as an indispensable aid to the proper acquisition of knowledge.

"We have not created the heavens and the earth and whatsoever is between them in sport: We have not created them except to bear the truth; but most people know it not."⁸

'But most people know it not' is the regretful note that it strikes at every turn. Wherever attention is drawn to the manifestation of life calling for reflection and introspection, expressions such as 'herein are

7. *Mishkat*, Kitab al 'Ilm. 8. Q. 44: 38-39.

portents,' 'herein are signs for folk who reflect,' 'for men of knowledge,' 'for folk who heed,' and 'for folk who understand, echo and reverberate only to emphasise the importance which the Qur'an attaches to reflection as a means of obtaining insight. "Show us the nature of things as they really are"⁹ is a characteristic prayer of the Prophet. The first step on the road to it is reflection.

Knowledge, in the Quranic conception covers every field of life—the life of the vast universe working around man in immediate contact as well as remote, and the life of man himself moving onward with a knowledge of his past. An acquisition of knowledge therefore imposes on him the exercise of not merely his intellectual and physical faculties, but his spiritual: and nothing is prohibited to him in Islam except, probably, probing vainly the veil beyond which his reason or intuition has been found incapable of advance. And herein lies the fundamental distinction between the Quranic and the classic Greek culture which forms the essential basis of the modern European civilization. For, while the Greek mind revetted its attention on 'Mankind' alone or on the study of man as man, the Quranic mind has to take in its sweep the entire Universe, not merely the world of man, and of his spirit, but the worlds of plants, birds, animals, insects, planets, the worlds seen and the unseen—all interlinked in its consciousness, with each other, and understand and reflect on the purposes underlying each creation and grasp the supreme spiritual principle of their linkage operating for a unified existence :

"The main purpose of the Qur'an", points out Sir Muhammad Iqbal, is "to awaken in man the higher consciousness of his manifold relations with God and the universe. It is in view of this essential aspect of the Quranic teaching that Goethe, while making a general review of Islam as an educational force said to Eckermann: "You see this teaching never fails. With all our systems,

9. *Hisn al-Hisin*.

we cannot go ; and generally speaking no man can go, further than that." The problem of Islam was really suggested by the mutual conflict, and at the same time mutual attraction, presented by the two forces of religion and civilization. The same problem confronted early Christianity. The great point in Christianity is the search for an independent content for spiritual life which, according to the insight of its founder, could be elevated, not by the forces of a world external to the soul of man, but by the revelation of a world within his soul. Islam fully agrees with this insight but adds that the illumination of the new world thus revealed is not something foreign to the world of matter but permeates it through and through."¹⁰

The Qur'an gives man full sanction to harness the forces at work both in him and in his external world, the forces of nature, through an appropriate study of them. But it makes one condition. It calls upon man to bear in mind the balance set in his nature, and to exercise the power acquired through knowledge to help him display in his life such other attributes of God as will equip him to 'show affection to the family of God' for which he has been created with the privilege of representing Him on earth by "being a shepherd or keeper unto every other." If we may so express, the impersonal power of Nature that Science brings into play is to be given a personality and made conscious of the balance set therein, as in the rest of creation. In other words, it is to be humanised, and "the spirit of God breathed" into it, to use a phrase of the Qur'an. This is the primary function of human activity and is to be kept in mind in order to appraise the full import of the injunction which sums up all that is required of man: "Believe and work righteously" informed by knowledge. The wider and deeper this knowledge of one's own self and one's external world of relations, the greater the chance one has to enter the order of the Salehin, Muttaqin, Siddiqin, Muqarribin and the rest

10. Sir Mohammad Iqbal: 'The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam', p. 8, Oxford University Press, 1934.

who in one capacity or another fulfil the role of the vicegerency of God on earth.

The last named type—The Muqarribin—those whom God draws to Himself—are those who aspire, in the language of the Prophet's prayer, to the knowledge of the 'Nature of things as they really are.' This knowledge of Reality, the fountain-head of life, is to be gained through what is termed in the language of 'Sufis' as 'Huzur ma'l llah', sense of God' or 'attendance on God', loosely rendered into English as 'Mystic experience', an acquisitive quality more freely developed in certain temperaments or minds spiritually inclined than in those particularly obsessed with the temporal aspects of life. This mystic experience or search for reality, however incommunicable, has in the context of of the Quranic ideology to serve as a dynamic source of knowledge stimulating action worthy of the role man has to play as the vicegerent of God on earth.

In the cultural process of Islam, the acquisition of knowledge, such as we have referred to above, is an indispensable condition of one's equipment for righteous activity. In fact, it is against the background which knowledge furnishes that the process of equipment is to be regulated. This process is marked by certain disciplines which may be divided into two categories. One consists of certain prescribed disciplines. The other are of the nature of self-discipline which one has to impose on oneself in the interests of one's own perfection. We shall take these for consideration in the chapter following.

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SOURCE MATERIAL:—*AL-QURAN*

KNOWLEDGE—*SIGNIFICANCE*

Say: Shall they who have knowledge and they who have it not, be treated alike? (Q. 39:9)

And the blind and the seeing are not alike ; neither darkness and light ; nor the cool shade and the hot wind ; (Q. 35:20)

And he who has been blind here, shall be blind hereafter, and stray further away from the road.
(Q. 17:72)

Say : My Lord ! Increase me in knowledge.
(Q. 20:114.)

SOURCES OF KNOWLEDGE

(i) *The Book* : Al-Quran : and the Example of the Prophet.

1. It is the Book wherein there is nothing doubtful—A guidance to the God fearing,

Who believe in the Unseen, who observe prayer, and out of what we have bestowed on them, expend (in our way) ;

And who believe in what hath been sent down to thee, and in what hath been sent down before thee, and have full faith in the life to come.

These are guided by their Lord ; and with these it shall be well. (Q. 2:1-4)

2. Truly hath God been gracious to the believers by raising up from among their own people an apostle to rehearse unto them His revelations, and to purify them, and to give them knowledge of the Book and of Wisdom : for hitherto they were in manifest error.

(Q. 3:164)

3. God hath caused the Book and the wisdom to descend upon thee (Muhammad) : and what thou knowest not He hath caused thee to Know : and the grace of God toward thee hath been great. (Q. 4:113)

4. Recite thou! For thy Lord is the most Beneficent, who hath taught the use of the pen; Hath taught man that which he knew not: (Q. 96:3-5)

5. Now hath a Light (Messenger) and a clear Book (Al-Qur'an) come to you from God, whereby God will guide him who shall follow His good pleasure to paths of peace, and will bring them out of darkness into light; and to the straight path will He guide them.
(Q. 5:17)

6. A noble pattern had ye in God's Apostle for all who hope in God and in the day hereafter, and oft remember God. (Q. 33:21).

(ii) *Sunnath Allah*: Nature and its working:

"Turn steadfastly to the way of devotion (Din)—the way of Allah (Fitrat Allah)—for which He hath fitted man. There is no altering in the way laid by Allah (Khalq Allah). That is the right way of devotion. But most people know it not." (Q. 30:29)

"Ye shall not find any change in the *Sunnat Allah* (way of God); ye shall not find any variableness in the *Sunnat Allah*." (Q. 35:43)

"The Sun and the Moon follow a system,
And the planets and the trees bend in adoration,
And the sky, He hath reared it on high,
And hath set the balance;
That in the balance ye should not transgress,
But keep it poised and not scant the balance."

(Q. 55:5-9)

And (know) that this is My way, the right one; so follow it, and follow not (other) ways, for they will lead you away from His way. This He enjoins on you that you may keep your duty. (Q. 6: 154)

"(Blessed is He) who hath created the seven heavens in layers. Thou canst see no disharmony in the handiwork of the Beneficent God. Then look again. Dost thou see any rifts ?

Then look again, and yet again ; Thy sight will return unto thee thwarted and tired." (Q. 67:3-4)

"Here are signs for men of understanding."
(Q. 3:187)

"There are signs even in your own soul !
(Q. 51:21)

And he hath subjected to you all that is in the Heavens and all that is on the Earth : All is from Him. Verily, herein are signs for those who reflect.

(Q. 45:13)

And many are the signs in the Heavens and on the Earth; and in the succession of the night and of the day are signs for men of understanding

Who standing, and sitting, and reclining, bear God in mind, and muse on the creation of the Heavens and of the Earth. "O Our Lord !" say they, "thou hast not created all this in vain !" (Q. 3:190-191)

We have not created the heavens and the Earth and what is between them for nought. (Q. 38:27)

It is He who hath appointed the Sun for brightness, and the Moon for a light, and hath ordained her stations that ye may learn the number of years and the reckoning of time. God hath not created all this but for a serious end. He maketh his signs clear to those who understand.

Verily, in the alternations of night and of day, and in all that God hath created in the Heavens and in the Earth are signs to those who fear Him! (Q. 10: 5-6)

It is God who hath reared the Heavens without pillars thou canst behold; then mounted his throne, and imposed laws on the Sun and Moon: each travel-
leth to its appointed goal. He ordereth all things. He maketh his signs clear that ye may have firm faith in a meeting with your Lord.

And He it is who hath outstretched the earth, and placed on it firm mountains, and rivers: and of every fruit He hath placed on it two kinds: He causeth the night to enshroud the day. Verily in this are signs for those who reflect.

And on the Earth are tracts close to each other, gardens of grapes and ploughed fields of corn, and palm trees, single or clustered. Though watered by the same water, yet some make we more excellent as food than other: Verily in all this are signs for those who understand! (Q. 13:2-4)

iii. *History of Man*

Have they never journeyed through the land, and seen what hath been the end of those who were before them? Mightier were they than these in strength; and they broke up the land, and dwelt in it in greater numbers than they who now dwell therein; and their apostles came to them with clear signs: and it was not God who would wrong them, but they wronged themselves. (Q. 30:9)

Certainly in their histories is an example for men of understanding. (Q. 12:111)

And how many cities which had been ungodly, and whose roofs are now laid low in ruin, have We destroyed! And wells have been abandoned and lofty castles!

Have they not journeyed through the land? Have they not hearts to understand with, or ears to hear with? It is not that to these sights their eyes are blind, but the hearts in their breasts are blind!

(Q. 22:45-46)

“God does not change the condition of a people unless they first change that which is in their hearts.”

(Q. 13:12)

“So travel in the land then to see what was the end of those who discarded (the way of God). (Q. 16:36)

“Man shall have nothing but what he strives for.”

(Q. 53:40)

“And whatever suffering ye suffer, it is what your hands have wrought.” (Q. 42:29)

“Travel in the land and see for yourselves the consequences to those who have rejected.” (Q. 6:11)

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SOURCE MATERIAL : *AL HADITH*

Importance :

1. “Acquire knowledge”, said the Prophet, “It enableth the possessor to distinguish right from wrong. It lights the way to heaven ; it is our companion when friendless : it guides us to happiness ; it sustains us in adversity ; it is a weapon against enemies and an ornament among friends. By virtue of it, Allah exalteth communities, and maketh them guides in good pursuits, and giveth them leadership ; so much so, that their footsteps are followed, their deeds are imitated, and their opinions are accepted and held in respect.”

(Ibn Abd al-Bar : Fadh al-‘Ilm)

2. Said the Prophet : “God has inspired me to announce : For him who goes out in search of knowledge, I shall make easy his way to heaven ; the benefits derived from knowledge are greater than the benefits derived from worship. (Baihaqi and Mishkat)

3. It is the duty of the learned to spread

knowledge. They should impart it to those who do not possess it, for, knowledge unused is like a thing lost. (Bukhari)

4. Narrates Abdallah bin Umar : The prophet once noticed two groups of his followers sitting in his mosque, and observed : "Both are goodly groups, but one is better occupied than the other. One is invoking God for favours. It is for God to concede or not to concede the favours asked for. But the other group is engaged in acquiring knowledge and also in imparting it to those who are ignorant. This group is better occupied than the other. In fact, I am myself entrusted with the task of teaching." Saying this, he took a seat in the midst of this group. (Darimi and Mishkat)

5. The best form of devotion to God is to seek knowledge. (Kunuzul Haqaiq)

The acquisition of knowledge is better than worship. (Awsat and Bazzar)

6. To acquire knowledge is binding on all believers, both men and women. (Ibn Maja)

7. A moment's contemplation is better than seventy years' worship. (Kunuzul Haqaiq)

8. It is narrated by Ali, the son-in-law of the Prophet : Said the Prophet : There is no goodness in that prayer in which one does not know what he prays, and there is no goodness in that knowledge which does not convey any sense ; and there is no goodness in that reading over which one does not reflect. (Darimi)

9. Said the Prophet : A learned man is like the stars in the firmament which in darkness light the way over land and sea. It is likely that the way-farer will miss his way when the stars disappear.

(Ahmed : Musnad)

10. Said the Prophet : The mind of the son of Adam is always young when engaged in search of knowledge. (Kunuzul Haqaiq)

11. He who goes forth in search of knowledge, engages himself in the cause of God until he returns (home). (Tirmizi and Darimi)

12. He who feels shy or is too proud to seek knowledge, will never gain knowledge. (Bukhari)

13. Narrates Jabir : A person asked of the Prophet: Who among the learned is the greatest? Replied the Prophet: He who goes on gathering knowledge from others; for, a truly learned man always hungers for further knowledge. (Muslim)

Sense of Understanding :

14. Said the Prophet: Explain things to the common folk according to their understanding.
(Bukhari)

15. Said the Prophet : When you speak to others anything which is beyond their understanding, it is likely that such a thing might prove harmful to some of them. (Muslim)

16. Said the Prophet : People will be called to account according to their sense of understanding.
(Kunuzul Haqaiq)

17. Said the Prophet : Do not talk flippantly before the wise; for they might get annoyed. Do not talk words of wisdom before people of weak understanding; for, they might talk lightly of you. Do not deny knowledge to these who are fit to receive it; for, that will be committing a sin. Do not deliver a learned discourse before an ignorant person; for, he will regard you as an ignorant person. You have a right to your

knowledge even as you have a right to your property.
(Darimi)

18. Said the Prophet: The religion of man is his sense of understanding, and he who has no sense of understanding has no religion. (Kunuzul Haqaiq)

19. Said the Prophet: One will be ranked in this and in the life hereafter according to one's sense of understanding. (Kunuzul Haqaiq)

Application of Knowledge :

20 Narrates Hafs: When the Prophet desired to appoint Ma'az as Judge of Yemen he asked him: "whenever a case comes up before you for decision, what procedure will you adopt to reach it? Ma'az replied: "I shall decide according to the Book of God." The Prophet then asked: "Suppose on any particular issue, the Book is silent?" Replied Ma'az: "I shall decide according to the example of the Prophet." The Prophet again asked: "Suppose you find no guidance either from the Book or from my practice?" Ma'az replied: "I shall then exercise my own personal judgment; but I shall see to it that my judgment does not conflict with the Law." On hearing this, the Prophet gently tapped on the breast of Ma'az by way of approbation. Ma'az then expressed his thanks to God for having inspired the Prophet to express his satisfaction.
(Abu Dawud)

Hiding Knowledge :

21. Said the Prophet: It is not meet for a man of learning to remain silent when an expression of what one knows is called for, nor is it proper for a man of ignorance to hide his ignorance by observing silence. God says, what you do not know, seek to know it from one who knows it. (Awsat: and Tabrani)

22. Observed the Prophet: Exhort one another

to discharge one's obligations in the sphere of knowledge. Denial of knowledge is more heinous than denial of one's right to his property. On the day of judgment, God will take account of this dereliction of duty. (Tibrani)

Abuse of Knowledge :

23. Said the Prophet : They are the worst of men who desire to confuse men of learning by putting to them intriguing questions. (Razin)

24. Said the Prophet : Do not seek knowledge only to overawe men of learning or to dispute with the ignorant or to gain the estimation of the public. For him who does so, the recompense is Fire. So beware !
(Ibn Maja : Abu Dawud)

25. A man shall be asked concerning five (things) on the day of resurrection : concerning his life, how he spent it ; concerning his youth, how he grew old ; concerning his wealth, whence he acquired it ; concerning his life, in what (way) he spent it ; and what was it that he did with the knowledge that he had acquired.
(Tirmizi)

To seek Knowledge from wherever available :

26. Said the Prophet : A piece of knowledge from wherever gained is like a lost property recovered ; let him take it as if it is his own. (Tirmizi)

27. Said the Prophet : Receive knowledge, whatever the vessel in which it is presented. It will not do you any harm. (Kunzul Haqaiq)

Legacy of Prophets :

28. Said the Prophet : To travel in search of knowledge is to take the road to heaven. Angels spread their wings to smoothen the path of the seeker. Every-

thing in the skies and in the earth, even the inmates of water, pray for him. The superiority of a man of learning over a man given to mere worship is like the superiority of a full moon over the stars. Men of learning are heirs to prophets. The Prophets did not leave behind material wealth. They left behind them only knowledge. He who has gained it, has gained ample fortune. (Tirmizi and Abu Dawud)

Learning in unworthy hands :

29. Said the Prophet : Religion will lose its value when men versed in religious knowledge live in sin.
(Hakim)

30. The Prophet always feared at the prospect of leaders among his community straying away from the right path. (Tirmizi)

31. Said the Prophet : A time will come when confirmed liars will hold the field of religion. They will attribute to me traditions never heard of either by you or by your predecessors. Beware of such persons and do not fall into their snares.
(Muslim ; Ahmed : Musnad)

32. Said the Prophet : A time will come when people will gather in places of worship and hold converse over the things of the world. Do not join such circles, for, no good will come out of what they do.
(Hakim)

33. Said the Prophet : Three types of people will be a source of mischief to your Faith. One is the learned man who has developed wickedness ; the second is the tyrannical ruler ; and the third is the ignorant man who ventures to lay down laws. (Dailami)

34. Said the Prophet : God does not like the man of learning who habitually waits upon men in authority.
(Hakim)

Chapter 8

PRESCRIBED DISCIPLINE

IN the preceding chapter, it has been emphasised that the cultural process in Islam is to be set against the background of knowledge. But the factor of knowledge, important as it is, suffers from an inherent weakness. It by itself cannot operate. A good deal depends on the recipient or agent who has to employ it. It is he who has to decide what use he will have to make of it. For instance, every religion has endeavoured to impress upon man the distinction between right and wrong. But a knowledge of either, however deep or carefully apprehended, cannot make him choose the one and shun the other. It is why, the founders of religions have thought it imperatively necessary to prescribe for their followers a course of compulsory discipline as an aid to purity of thought and life. But it may be noted that even this disciplinary course, however exacting, need not necessarily produce the state of mind which impels one to take to what is intrinsically right and to avoid what is intrinsically wrong, both in relation to one's self and in relation to those around him. It may even degenerate into a mere formality, a lifeless or empty ritual boding nothing to one's life as actually lived from day to day. It is only when it is gone through in a spirit of sincerity that it will, in all livelihood, serve as a stimulus to self discipline operating for a righteous life.

There are four different disciplines which the Qur'an prescribes for its followers as compulsory duties. They are, firstly, daily prayers at stated hours in the prescribed form; secondly, regular payment of a portion of one's earning for the up-keep of the poor, called *Zakat*; thirdly, observance of fast for a month every year; and lastly, circumstances favouring, attendance,

at least once in one's life time, at the annual assemblage of Muslims held at the seat of Ka'aba in Mecca. These four compulsory disciplines are regarded as the four pillars of Islam.

The first duty of daily prayers is to engender in the mind of man a living sense of God to whom he owes his life and to whom he is to render eventually an account of it. It is this primary sense of God in him which has to enable him not only to discharge his other compulsory duties mentioned above, but to energize him morally to fulfil, in his daily activity, his role as the vicegerent of God on earth. The second duty, viz., payment of the poor-due or *Zakat* is very often coupled with the first by the Qur'an. In fact, such great stress is laid on this duty of caring for the poor, that the Qur'an regards the discharge of the duty of prayer as mere mockery, if it is not expressed in a proper discharge of the second duty.

What thinkest thou of him who beliieth Faith?
He it is who repulses the orphan,
And urges not the feeding of the poor.
Woe to those who pray,
But are heedless of what they pray,
To those who make a show of devotion,
But refuse help to the needy. (Q. 107:1-7)

Of the other two disciplines, the observance of fast is clearly a spiritual exercise and is meant to prevent unhealthy desires rising in the mind and to stimulate and elevate the spiritual qualities inherent in human nature. The last one, the performance of Haj, is both spiritual and social in its import and has to operate, in its final reaches, for the unity of man.

These four disciplines, as indicated above, are to prepare man for a life of devotion to God and of service to fellow-men, by developing in the individual the sense of self-discipline such as shall enable him to discard from his life what is unworthy of man and to cultivate qualities which are worthy—an aspect of the subject

which will be taken up for consideration in the next chapter.

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SOURCE MATERIAL: *AL-QURAN*

Truly the men who resign themselves to God and the women who resign themselves, and the believing men and the believing women, and the devout men and the devout women, and the men of truth and the women of truth, and the patient men and the patient women, and the humble men and the humble women, and the men who give alms and the women who give alms, and the men who fast and the women who fast, and the chaste men and the chaste women, and the men and the women who oft remember God—for them hath God prepared forgiveness and a rich recompense. (Q: 33:35)

Happy the believers !

Who in their prayers are humble,

And turn away from idle talk,

And pay the poor-due

And who keep their sexual appetites under check,

And who tend well their trusts and their covenants,

And who keep them strictly to their prayers—

These are they,

Who shall inherit Paradise to dwell therein forever.

(Q. 23:1-5 and 7-11)

AL-HADITH

Said the Prophet of Islam : He who offers prayers for the mere show of it is guilty of *Shirk* (infidelity to God). He who observes fast for the mere show of it is guilty of *shirk*, and he who dispenses charity for the mere show of it is guilty of *shirk*. (Ahmed : Musnad)

PRAYER AND FASTING

*AL-QURAN**(a) Prayer :*

And observe ye the times of prayers, and fear ye God: for it is He to whom ye shall be gathered.
(Q. 6:72)

And all in the Heavens and all on the Earth, each thing that moveth, and the very angels, adore God, and are free from pride;

They fear their Lord who is above them, and do what they are bidden: (Q. 16:50-51)

Hast thou not seen how all in the Heavens and in the Earth uttereth the praise of God?—the very birds as they spread their wings? Every creature knoweth its prayer and its praise! and God knoweth what they do.

God's, the Kingdom of the Heavens and of the Earth: and unto God the final return! (Q. 24:41)

O Believers! remember God with frequent remembrance, and praise him morning and evening.

He blesseth you, and His angels intercede for you, that He may bring you forth out of darkness into light: and Merciful is He to the Believers.

Their greeting on the day when they shall meet Him shall be "peace!" And He hath got ready for them a noble recompense. (Q. 33:41-43)

Recite the portions of the Book which have been revealed to thee and discharge the duty of prayer: for prayer restraineth from the filthy and the blameworthy. And the gravest duty is the remembrance of God; and God knoweth what ye do. (Q. 29:45)

Happy is he who is purified.

And who remembereth the name of his Lord and prayeth. (Q. 87:14-15)

(b) *Fasting* :

O believers! a fast is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you, that ye may guard against evil—fast for a fixed number of days. But he among you who shall be sick, or on a journey, shall fast the same number of other days: and for those who can keep (but with hardship) is a redemption by feeding a poor man. And he who of his own accord offereth more, shall derive good from it: and good shall it be for you to fast—if ye knew it.

Ramadhan is that (month) in which the Qur'an was sent down as guidance to mankind, and to explain that guidance, and to afford illumination (a criterion to distinguish between truth and untruth). So, every one of you who is in his home should set about the fast; but he who is sick or upon a journey shall fast a like number of other days. God wisheth you ease, and wisheth not your discomfort, and that you fulfil the number of days, and that you glorify God for His guidance, and that you be thankful. (Q. 2:179-191)

You are allowed on the night of the fast to approach your wives: they are your garment and ye are their garment. God knoweth that ye defraud yourselves therein, so He turneth unto you and forgiveth you! Now, therefore, go in unto them with full desire for that which God hath ordained for you; and eat and drink until ye can discern a white thread from a black thread by the daybreak: then fast strictly till night, and go not in unto them, but rather pass the time in the mosques. These are the bounds set up by God: therefore come not near them. Thus God maketh his signs clear to men that they may fear Him. (Q. 2:184)

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PRAYER AND FAST

AL-HADITH

1. The man of good disposition certainly attains thereby the degree of the man of prayer and fasting. (Tirmizi)

2. Narrates Abdullah bin 'Amru bin al-'Aus. "The Prophet said, 'O' Abdullah! I have been told that thou dost fast (all) day and standest up to pray (all) night.' I said, 'Yes, O prophet of God! He said, You do not do (like that). Keep fast and eat also, keep awake for prayer, and sleep also, for verily you owe a duty to your body; you owe a duty to your eyes; you owe a duty to your people; you owe a duty to your visitors; and nobody has truly fasted who has kept a fast everyday. (A fast of) three days every month is (equal to) fasting for the whole year; so, fast three days every month. (Bukhari and Muslim)

3. When ye keep fast, oil your face, so that people might not know that ye were fasting. (Bukhari)

4. How many men fast who have nothing of fasting about them but thirst; and how many men stand up (to pray all night) who have nothing about them of prayer except wakefulness! (Darimi)

5. Verily, God has relieved the traveller of half (his) prayer, and has given him leave to break (his) fast; and He has also given leave in respect thereof to the sick and the woman who gives suck to a child, and to pregnant women, when they fear (a harm) to their child. (Tirmizi, Abu Dawud and Nasai)

6. Good thoughts are of the texture of good worship. (Abu Dawud)

7. The signs of a hypocrite are three; although

he fasts and prays and thinks that he is a Muslim, when he speaks, he is false; when he promises, he fails; and when he is trusted, he plays false. (Muslim)

8. Verily, the Mu'min reaches, by his good manners, to the degree (of excellence) of the man who stands up praying all night and fasts all day long. (Abu Dawud)

9. He who endeavours (to relieve) the needy, the depressed, and the poor, is as one who strives in the service of God, is as one who stands up (to pray all night) and does not relax or rest, and as one who fasts and breaks it not.' (Bukhari and Muslim)

10. Shall I tell you of something more excellent in degree than fasting and alms giving and prayer? It is to promote concord. (Abu Dawud, Tirmizi)

11. He who strives for the (well-being of) poor widows and the poor; is like him who strives in the cause of God, or like him who fasts all day and stands up (to pray) all night. (Muslim, Abu Dawud, Ibn Maja)

12. God does not accept a prayer without purity, nor a *Sadaqa* out of embezzled money. (Muslim and Timizi)

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(c) *Zakat and Sadaqa* *

AL-QURAN

They who believe in the unseen, who observe prayer, and out of what hath been bestowed on them, expend for God:

* Note:—*Zakat* is a compulsory levy for the upkeep of the poor and *Sadaqa* is voluntary charity.

And who believe in what hath been sent down to thee, and in what hath been sent down before thee, and full faith have they in the life to come :

These are guided by their Lord, and with these it shall be well. (Q. 2:2-4)

And observe prayer and pay the legal impost, and bow down with those who bow. (Q. 2:43)

There is no piety in turning your faces towards the east or the west, but he is pious who believeth in God, and the last day, and the angels, and the scriptures, and the prophets; who for the love of God disburseth his wealth to his kindred, and to the orphans, and the needy, and the wayfarer, and those who ask, and for redeeming the captive, who observeth prayer, and payeth the legal alms, and who is of those who are faithful to their engagements when they have engaged in them, and patient under ills and hardships, and in time of trouble—these are they who are just and these are they who fear the Lord. (Q. 2:177)

O Believers! Of a truth, many of the teachers and monks do devour men's substance in vanity, and turn them from the way of God. But to those who treasure up gold and silver and expend it not in the way of God, announce tidings of a grievous torment. (Q. 9:34)

Ye shall never attain to goodness till ye give alms of that which ye love: and whatever ye give, of a truth, God knoweth it. (Q. 3:91)

Fear God, then, with all your might, and hear and obey: and give alms for your own weal; for they who are saved from their own greed, shall prosper.

If ye lend God a generous loan, He will double it to you and will forgive you, for God is All-thankful, All-clement.

He knoweth alike the hidden and the manifest :
the Mighty, the Wise! (Q. 64:16-18)

Who though longing for it themselves, bestow
their food on the poor and the orphan and the captive:
(and say)

"We feed you for the sake of God: we seek from
you neither recompense nor thanks. (Q. 76:8-10)

The likeness of those who expend their wealth for
for the cause of God, is that of a grain of corn which
produceth seven ears, and in each ear a hundred
grains; and God will multiply to whom He pleaseth:
God is Liberal, Knowing!

They who expend their wealth for the cause of
God, and never follow what they have laid out with
reproaches or harm, shall have their reward with their
Lord; no fear shall come upon them, neither shall
they be put to grief.

A kind speech and forgiveness is better than alms
followed by injury. God is Self-sufficient, Clement.

O ye who believe! make not your alms void by
reproaches and injury, like him who spendeth his sub-
stance to be seen of men, and believeth not in God
and in the latter day. The likeness of such an one
is that of a rock with a thin soil upon it on which a
heavy rain falleth but leaveth it hard: No profit from
their works shall they be able to gain; for God gui-
deth not the unbelieving people.

And the likeness of those who expend their sub-
stance from a desire to please God, and for the esta-
blishing of their souls, is as a garden on a hill, on
which the heavy rain falleth, and it yieldeth its fruits
twofold; and even if a heavy rain fall not on it, yet is
there a dew: God beholdeth your actions.

(Q. 2:263-267)

Give ye your alms openly? It is well. Do ye

conceal them and give them to the poor? This, too, will be of advantage to you, and will do away your sins: and God is cognisant of your actions.

Their guidance is not thy affair but God guideth whom he pleaseth. And the good that ye shall give in alms shall redound unto yourselves, and ye shall not give but as seeking the pleasure of God and whatever good thing ye shall have given in alms, shall be repaid you, and ye shall not be wronged. There are among you the poor, who being wholly engaged in the cause of God, have it not in their power to strike out into the earth for riches. Those who know them not, think them rich because of their modesty. By this their token thou shalt know them—they ask not of men with importunity: and of whatever good thing ye shall give them in alms, of a truth God will take knowledge.

They who give away their substance in alms, by night and day, in private and in public, shall have their reward with their Lord: no fear shall come on them, neither shall they be put to grief.

(Q. 2:273 - 275)

Who give alms, alike in prosperity and in success, and who master their anger, and forgive others! God loveth the doers of good. (Q. 3:128)

O ye who believe! let not your wealth and your children delude you into forgetfulness of God. Whoever shall act thus, shall surely suffer loss.

And expend in the cause of God out of that with which we have supplied you, ere death surprise each one of you, and he say, "O Lord! wilt thou not respite me to a term not far distant, that I may give alms, and become of the just?"

And by no means will god respite a soul when its hour hath come! And God is fully cognizant of what ye do. (Q. 63:9-11)

And to the orphan therefore wrong him not; And as to him that asketh of thee, chide him not away;

And as for the favours of thy Lord tell them abroad. (Q. 93:9-11)

And to him who is of kin render his due, and also to the poor and to the wayfarer; yet waste not wastefully.

He it is who produceth gardens of the vine trelised and untrelised, and the palm trees, and the corn of various food, and olives, and pomegranates like. Eat of their fruit when they bear fruit, and pay the due thereof on the day of its ingathering: and be not prodigal, for God loveth not the prodigal. (Q. 17:28)

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AL - HADITH

1. The Prophet said: 'Which of you loves his heir's wealth better than his own?' His disciples said, "O Prophet of God! there is none of us whose own wealth is not dearer to him than his heir's. The Prophet said, 'His wealth is what is gone before him, and what remains is the wealth of his heirs.' (Bukhari)

2. The first of those who shall be called to account, on the day of resurrection, shall be who who had had the whole of the Qur'an by heart, and he who had been killed in the way of God, and he who had an abundance of wealth. Then shall God say to him who had got the whole of the Qur'an by heart: 'Did I not teach thee what I revealed to My Prophet?' He will say, 'Yes, my Lord!' God will ask: 'And what hast thou done in regard to what thou didst learn therein?',

He will say, 'I was constantly at it in the hours of night and in the hours of day'. God will say to him; 'Thou liest'; and the angels also shall say, 'Thou liest'; thou didst only desire that men should say that such an one was a reciter of the Qur'an and that has been said already'.

And the master of wealth shall be brought before God: and God shall say: 'Did I not give thee an abundance of wealth, so that thou wast not in want of anything? He will say, 'Yes my Lord!' God will say, 'And what hast thou done with what I gave thee?' He will say, 'I regarded the rights of kinship, and gave alms'. God will say to him, 'Thou liest;' and the angels also shall say to him: 'Thou liest'. And God will say to him: Nay, Thou didst desire that men should say that such an one was a generous man; and that has been said already.'

Then shall he who had been killed in the way of God be brought before Him, and God will say to him, 'What was it that thou wast killed for? He shall say, 'Thou didst bid us do Jihad in Thy way, and I fought, and was killed'. God will say to him 'Thou liest', and the angels also shall say, 'Thou liest.' And God will say to him: 'Nay, but thou didst desire that men should say that such an one was a valiant man; and that has been said already.'

These are the three men who, of all creatures, shall be first sent into fire. (Muslim, Nasai, and Tirmizi)

3. Said the Prophet: "O 'Aisha! turn not the poor away (from thy door) without giving him something, although it be a date. O 'Aisha! love the poor, and let them come near thee; God will bring thee nearer to Himself on the day of resurrection. (Tirmizi)

4. A man said, 'O Prophet of God! such and such a woman is reputed for her frequent prayers and

fastings and almsgiving but she offends her neighbours by her tongue.' The Prophet said, 'She will be in the fire'. The man said, 'such and such a woman is reputed less for her fastings and almsgivings and prayers, and she gives but little in sadaqa, but she does not offend her neighbours by her tongue. The Prophet said, 'She will be in paradise'. (Baihaqi)

5. Verily, what reaches the believer of his works and his good actions, after his death, is the knowledge which he acquired and spread abroad, and a righteous issue which he has left (behind him), or a book which he has given to inherit, or a place of worship which he has built, or a house for the homeless which he has built, or a canal which he has caused to be dug, or an act of charity which he has done out of his wealth while in his health and life. (The good effects thereof) reach him (even) after his death. (Baihaqi)

6. A man said: 'O Prophet of God! I have a dinar with me.' The Prophet said 'Then bestow it upon thyself.' The man said he had another more. 'Then', said the Prophet, 'bestow it upon thy children.' 'I have yet another, the man said. 'Then bestow it upon thy wife', was the Prophet's reply. 'I have yet another', the man said. 'Then bestow it upon thy dependents', said the Prophet. The man said, I have yet another.' 'Then, said the Prophet, (bestow it) upon whom thou seest fit! (Abu Dawood and Nasai)

7. It was asked of the Prophet, 'What is the best almsgiving?' 'That you give alms whilst you are in health and hope to be rich, and fear poverty; and put it not off to the time when (the soul) shall reach your throat, and you shall say, 'This is for such and such a one; when it is already to be his.'

(Bakhari, Muslim, Abu Dawood and Nasai)

8. That a man give a dirham in alms during his

lifetime is better for him than that he give an hundred dirhams at his death. (Abu Dawood)

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(d) *Haj*:

AL-QURAN

And when Abraham, with Ishmael, raised the foundations of the House, they said, "Our Lord! accept it from us; for, Thou art the Hearer, the Knower.

O Our Lord! make of us a people who surrender (to God) and our posterity too; and teach us our holy rites; and be turned towards us, for thou art He who turneth, the Merciful.

O our Lord! raise up among them an apostle who may rehearse thy signs unto them, and teach them the Book and Wisdom, and purify them: for thou art the Mighty, the Wise. (Q. 2:121-123)

And remember when we appointed the holy house as man's resort and safe retreat, and said, "Take ye the station of Abraham for a place of prayer": And we commanded Abraham and Ishmael: "Purify my house for those who shall go in procession round it, and those who shall abide there for devotion, those who shall bow down and prostrate themselves."

(Q. 2:119)

The first place of worship that was founded for mankind, was that in Becca (Mecca), blessed, and a guidance to human beings.

In it are evident signs, even the standing place of Abraham: and he who entereth is safe. And the pilgrimage to the place of worship is a service due to God from those who are able to journey thither.

(Q. 3:90-1)

And call to mind when we assigned the site of the House to Abraham and said: "Unite not aught with Me in worship. And cleanse My house for those who go in procession round it, and who stand or bow in worship;" (Q. 22:27)

Let the Pilgrimage be made in the months already known: whoever therefore undertaketh the Pilgrimage therein, let him not know a woman, nor transgress, nor wrangle in the Pilgrimage. The good which ye do God knoweth it. And provide for your journey; but the best provision is the fear of God: fear me, then, O men of understanding!

It shall be no crime in you if ye seek an increase from your Lord; and when ye pour swiftly on from Arafat, then remember God near the holy monument; and remember Him, because He hath guided you who before this were of those who went astray:

Then pass on quickly where the people quickly pass, and ask pardon of God, for God is Forgiving, Merciful.

And when ye have finished your holy rites, remember God as ye remember your own fathers, or with a yet more intense remembrance! (Q. 2:193-196)

Chapter 9

SELF-DISCIPLINE

AS pointed out in the preceding chapter, the cultural process of Islam comprehends not only a course of compulsory discipline for every individual but a voluntary observance of a code of personal and social morality. In dealing here with the latter aspect of this process, the ethical, it does not seem necessary to expatiate at length on its intrinsic importance to life, since it is so obvious. Occasion will however be taken in the next chapter to explain the spirit in which ethical values are to be pursued so as to assure for man the style of righteous living favoured of the Qur'an. The ethical injunction of the Qur'an is simple enough. It runs: 'Enjoin what is 'Ma'aruf' or what is well-known or universally regarded as 'good,' and forbid what is 'Munkar,' or what is universally regarded as 'not good'. But the emphasis which the Qur'an lays on this injunction is so great that it is repeated over and over again in the course of the Book with as great a frequency as the injunction, "Believe and work righteously." The source material dealing with it is, in its details, too extensive to allow a comprehensive selection easily. Still, within the space at disposal here, the essential material pertinent to the objective of this volume is covered!

It is divided into 2 sections. One consists of what one is to avoid in life, the other of what one should cultivate in the interests of an integrated or a righteous life. The section on what one is to avoid includes also directions on what is distinctly prohibited in matters of food and drink. The two sections are prefaced with a brief section on the basis of Islamic ethics, and the need for distinguishing between right and wrong.

SOURCE MATERIAL

Section I—General

SENSE OF GOD — *BASIS OF ETHICS**AL-QURAN*

We have sent down the Book to thee with the Truth: serve thou God then, and be sincere in thy service. (Q. 39:3-4)

And for him who putteth his trust in God will God be all-sufficient. (Q. 65:3)

Say: My prayer's and my sacrifice and my life and my death are all for God, Lord of the worlds.

(Q. 6:163)

AL-HADITH

1. Abu Zar Gaffari states: The Prophet once told me: "Wherever you be and whatever your condition, do not cease to feel the presence of God in you; and do some good deed the moment you feel you have done a wrong thing, as the merit of the one will wipe out the sin of the other, and behave well with others.

(Ahmed: Musnad, Tirmizi, Darimi)

2. Said the Prophet: A true believer in God is an embodiment of love. There is no goodness in him who does not show affection to others and to whom others do not show affection. (Ahmed : Musnad)

3. Said the Prophet: Of the things which God loves best in his creatures is that love which is exercised solely for the sake of God and that hate which is exercised solely for the sake of God. (Abu Dawud)

4. Said the Prophet: Beware, your deeds shall

always be for the sake of God only; deeds which are done merely out of vanity or to catch the public eye will eventually bring harm to the doer. (Dailami)

Right and Wrong

AL-QURAN

"Allah it is who hath revealed the word with the Truth and the balance" (Q. 42:16)

By the soul and Him who balanced it and infused into the same the sense of discrimination and the power of choosing between the wrong and the right, happy is he who keepeth it pure, and unhappy is he who corrupteth it." (Q. 91:7-10)

What! have we not made him two eyes,
And tongue, and two lips,
And directed him to (distinguish between) the two
highways?

Yet he attempted not the steep one.

Who shall teach thee what the steep is?

It is to free the slave,

Or to feed in the day of hunger

The orphan who is near of kin, or the poor man
that lieth in the dust;

Beside this, to be of those who believe, and enjoin steadfastness on each other, and enjoin compassion on each other.

These are to be the people of the right hand:

While they who disbelieve our signs are the people of the left.

Around them the Fire has closed. (Q. 90:4-20)

And bear in mind when Luqman said to his son by way of warning....

"O my son! observe prayer, and enjoin the right and forbid the wrong, and be patient under whatever shall betide thee: for this is a bounden duty.

And distort not thy face at men; nor walk thou loftily on the earth; for God loveth no arrogant vain-glorious one.

But let thy pace be middling; and lower thy voice: for the least pleasing of voices is surely the voice of asses." (Q. 31:16-18)

Verily, God enjoineth justice and the doing of good and gifts to kindred; and he forbiddeth wickedness and oppression. He warneth you that haply ye may be mindful. (Q. 6:92)

Will ye enjoin what is right upon others, and forget yourselves? Yet ye read the Book: will ye not understand? (Q. 2:41)

By time! Verily, Man is inclined to the way of loss, except such as have faith and do that be right, and enjoin steadfastness on each other. (Q. 103:1-4)

Whoever doeth that which is right, whether male or female, if a believer in God, him will we surely quicken to a happy life, and recompense them with a reward meet for their best deeds. (Q. 16:99)

"Those who strive in our way, we shall show them the way." (Q. 29:69)

He guideth to Himself him who turneth to Him.
(Q. 13:27)

Whosoever followeth the right course, it is only for the good of his own soul that he doeth so; and whoever followeth the wrong course, doeth so to its hurt. No soul charged with its own responsibility shall bear another's responsibility." (Q. 17:16)

"I will not suffer the work of any among you that worketh, whether male or female, to be lost."

(Q. 3:193)

Deem they whose gettings are only evil, that we will deal with them as with those who believe and work righteousness, so that their lives and deaths shall be alike? Ill do they judge.

In all truth hath God created the Heavens and the Earth, that he may reward everyone as he shall have wrought; and they shall not be wronged.

(Q. 45:20-21)

The Straight Path :

Praise is only for God, Sustainer, Cherisher and Lord of all Beings !

The Compassionate, the Merciful !

King on the day of recompense!

Thee only do we serve, and Thee alone do we ask for help.

Guide us to the straight path,

The path of those to whom thou hast been gracious,

Of those who have not earned Thy displeasure,

Or have not gone adrift. Amen. (Q. 1:7)

AL-HADITH

1. Said the Prophet: God is not regardful of your fine visages or your wealth. He is regardful only of your hearts and actions. (Muslim)

2. Abu Amama once asked of the Prophet: What is faith? Said the Prophet: "Whenever a good deed done by you gives you inward joy and whenever a wrong thing done by you gives you the sense of regret, you are verily a man of faith. (Ahmed : Musnad)

3. Said the Prophet: none of you will be a man of faith unless his desires conform to the laws of God.

(Sharah ul Sunnah)

4. God says: "O my people ! if all those who are already born or will be born hereafter, and if all human beings and all jinns should be as good as the most righteous among you, it will not add a whit to my sovereignty over the world. O my people ! in like manner, if all those who have gone before, and those who will come after, and all human beings and jinns should be as wicked as the most wicked among you, it will not detract a whit from my sovereignty. O my people ! if all those who have gone before and all those who may come after you should assemble at a place and each one of them should ask of me a gift and I grant the prayer of each, it will not diminish my store-house of mercy and benevolence even to the extent of a drop taken out of an ocean. O my people ! remember, that it is your own deeds over which, for your sake, I keep watch and return to you. So, whoever gets a pleasing requital for his action, let him offer his thanks to God; and whosoever receives an unpleasant requital for his action, let him blame himself for it, and none else." (Muslim)

5. Said the Prophet : The endeavour to live a life free of sins is the best of endeavours. (Tabrani)

6. No one is superior to another except through righteous activity. (Ahmed : Musnad)

7. Said the Prophet: He whose inward aspect is evil but who puts on the garb of a saint, God will fill him with evil alone. (Dailami)

8. Umar bin al Khattab states: "The Prophet used to observe that action is the result of intention; and one gets the fruit of one's action according to the intention behind it. So, he who migrated (from Mecca to Madina) for the sake of God and his Prophet, his migration would be regarded as a true *hijrat* (migration) but if one has migrated for the sake of a woman or for any other purpose, his migration, in the eyes of God,

will be regarded as a migration not for God and his Prophet but for his real object only.

(Bukhari and Muslim)

9. Said the Prophet: If you should undertake to observe six things, I shall undertake to assure your entry into heaven. These six things are:

- (i) Whenever you speak, speak what is true;
- (ii) Whenever you make a promise to another, fulfill it;
- (iii) If anything is entrusted to you as a trust, respect the conditions of that trust;
- (iv) Protect your private parts from improper use;
- (v) What is not allowed to you to look on, close your eyes to it; and
- (vi) And whenever you are enjoined to withdraw your hand from doing anything, do withdraw it. (Ahmed and Baihaqi)

10. Avoid ye the seven destructive things; the joining (of others) with God; the killing of breathing beings which God has forbidden except under lawful necessity; the devouring of usury; the devouring of the wealth of the orphan; the turning of (one's) back on the day of battle, and the calumniating of chaste women who are believing (but) careless. (Bukhari)

11. Said the Prophet: "My Lord has enjoined on me nine things: to fear God in privacy and in public; to say a just word in a state of anger or of joy; to follow a (middle) way in poverty and affluence; to perform my duty towards him who has cut off all ties with me; and give, in the hour of his need, him who, in the hour of my need, had declined to give me; and forgive him who wrongs me; and to let my silence be for reflection, and my speaking for a remembrance (of God) and to rest my eyes on a thing only to take example; and to exhort others to do justice to each other. (Ibn Maja and Razin)

12. 'What man is the best of men?' was asked of the Prophet. 'Every clean-hearted and true-tongued man,' said the Prophet. 'We know the true-tongued man, but what is the clean-hearted?', was the next question. 'He is the pure, the pious, the person on whom no sin hath laid hold, or is guilty of any transgression, and who has not borne grudge against another or envy,' was the Prophet's reply. (Baihaqi)

13. Said the Prophet: The best of you are those who possess the best of manners. (Bukhari and Muslim)

14. The best of believers in God are those who display in their daily life the best of manners.

(Abu Dawud and Darimi)

15. The Prophet once prayed: "O my God! you have through your grace given me a good form. May Thou equip me equally with good manners.

(Ahmed's Musnad)

16. One of the favourite prayers of the Prophet during night hours was: "O my God! Guide me to develop the best of manners, for, Thou alone can'st guide me to that end, and remove from me everything that savours of bad manners, for, Thou alone can'st guide me to that end. (Muslim)

17. Amar Bin Ubaid asked of the Prophet: What is Islam? The Prophet replied: Sincerity in speech and courtesy. The questioner again asked: What is belief in God? The reply was: Patience and Magnanimity. (Ahmed: Musnad)

18. Abu Zar Ghaffari narrates that it was once asked of the Prophet: What do you think of a person

who has done a good deed, and for which the public offer him praise? Another version of this question is: what do you think of him who has done a good deed and who is for that reason loved by the public? And the Prophet replied: This is a clear indication of that person being a true believer. (Muslim)

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Section II — What to Avoid

WEAKNESSES OF THE TONGUE:—*Falsehood, Reviling, Slander, back-biting, cursing, etc.,*

AL-QUR'AN

Believers ! why profess ye that which ye practise not? Most hateful is it to God that ye say that which ye do not. (Q. 61:2-3)

Truly God guideth not him who is a transgressor, a liar. (Q. 40:29).

God loveth no arrogant vain-glorious person.

(Q. 31:17)

And let thy pace be middling; and lower thy voice, for the least pleasing of voices is the voice of asses.

(Q. 31:19)

"O you who believe ! let not any people laugh at another people, perchance they may be better than they; nor let any women (laugh) at (other) women, perchance they may be better than they, and do not find fault with your people, nor call one another by nicknames. Evil is a bad name after faith, and whoever does not turn, these it is that are the unjust.

(Q. 49:11)

Woe to every backbiter, defamer. (Q. 104:1)

And as to him that asketh of thee chide him not sway. (Q. 93:10).

Revile not those whom they call on beside God, lest they, in their ignorance, despitefully revile Him.
(Q. 6:108)

Summon thou to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and with kindly warning: argue with them in the kindest manner. (Q. 16:125)

Al-Hadith

1. Said the Prophet: When man wakes up in the morning, all the limbs of his body cry out to the tongue in earnest entreaty: "For our sake fear God, for, we are interlinked with thee. If thou art in proper form, we automatically act properly. On the other hand, if thou shouldst take a wrong course, automatically we follow suit (and suffer the consequence). (Tirmizi)

2. Said the Prophet: If one stands surety for his tongue and his private parts, I shall guarantee his entry into heaven. (Bukhari)

3. Sufyan bin Abdullah Thaqafi narrates: once I asked of the Prophet: "O Prophet of God! Of all the things that you may fear, pray which is the most frightful?" Sufyan states that the Prophet holding his tongue between his fingers said: "The greatest danger lies here." (Tirmizi)

4. When it was asked of the Prophet: "What is the way to salvation?", the Prophet replied: "Keep thy

tongue under control,—you have the opportunity to try it at home,—and weep over your sins. (Tirmizi)

5. Once the Prophet addressing Abu Zar Gaffari said : Shall I point out to you two virtues which are very light for your back to bear, but which, in the scales of God, weigh heavily?" "O Prophet of God ! What are those two virtues?" asked Gaffari. The Prophet replied : "the habit of silence, and good manners. By him in whose control is my soul, I say, these two are to be regarded as matchless traits in one's character." (Baihaqi)

6. Narrates Imran bin Hattan : Once I went to Abu Zar Gaffari. I found him in a mosque sitting by himself with a black blanket covered over his body. I submitted to him : "O Abu Zar ! why this state of solitude ? He replied : I have heard the Prophet say : "It is better to live in solitude than to live in bad company; it is better to live in good company than to live in solitude; and it is better to speak words of goodness to others than to observe silence; and it is better to observe silence than to speak things evil. (Baihaqi).

7. 'Ali Bin al-Husain Zainul 'Abidin, the grandson of the Prophet, states that the Prophet once observed : "A pleasant Islamic quality is the inclination to avoid idle talk." (Malik and Ibn Maja)

8. "A back-biter will not be able to enter heaven." (Bukhari and Muslim)

9. Said the Prophet : "The best of people are those whose very sight stimulates in one the thought of God, and the worst are those who indulge in back-biting, creating ill-will between friends, and in slandering others and creating trouble for them."

(Ahmad, Musnad and Baihaqi)

10. Said the Prophet once: I wish that none of my companions will communicate to me anything disparaging to any other companion, for, my desire is that whenever I come into your midst, my heart should entertain no misgivings about anyone. (Abu Dawud)

11. A party of jews once came to the Prophet and out of malice, addressed him: "Assamu-alaikum", instead of "Assalamu-Alaikum". The former is a term of abuse, meaning, "May death overtake you", whereas the latter means, "May peace be on you". Aisha, the wife of the Prophet, catching the significance of the expression retorted: "Be it so to you." The Prophet turning to her said: "Aisha! Restrain your tongue. Be gentle, and do not use unbecoming language." (Bukhari)

12. Said the Prophet: A believer in God never employs his tongue against another. He neither curses him, nor scolds him, nor abuses him. (Tirmizi)

13. Said the Prophet: He who indulges in intemperate language and is harsh in behaviour will not enter heaven. (Abu Dawud)

14. Said the Prophet: Keep your tongue under proper control. A good many people have come to grief on account of it. (Tirmizi)

15. He who believes in God and in the Day of Requital should, in his speech, employ the language of decency. (Ibn Maja)

16. No man blames another for wickedness and unbelief, but that the blame will return upon him.
(Bukhari)

17. A calumniator shall not enter paradise.

(Bukhari)

18. A true believer in God does not calumniate, nor curse, nor indulge in filthy actions, nor is he impudent towards others. (Tirmizi)

19. Said the Prophet: "Backbiting is more heinous than fornication. Some of the companions present asked: "Oh Prophet of God! how is backbiting more heinous than fornication?" Replied the Prophet: "If a man unfortunately commits fornication, he will only have to repent before God, and it is possible God will pardon him. On the other hand, if one slanders another, the person affected alone is entitled to forgive him. God will not, till then, pardon him and effect his salvation. (Baihaqi)

20. Abu Huraira narrates: The Prophet once asked his companions: Do you know what backbiting is? The companion said: "The Prophet of God knows better." Then the Prophet said: "To speak of another in a manner hurtful to his reputation." One of the companions asked: "Sire, suppose I speak of a weakness in some one as it really exists in him? The Prophet replied: Even then, it will be slander; and if the alleged weakness is not really in him, then what is alleged will assume a more serious aspect. (Muslim)

21. It was asked of the Prophet whether a believer could be timid. He said: "It is possible." It was asked whether a believer could be a miser. He said: "It is possible." Again it was asked of him whether a believer could be a liar. He said: "No." (The idea of the Prophet was that a believer in God could not develop the filthy habit of lying. Faith cannot accommodate or countenance falsehood).

(Malik and Baihaqi)

22. He is not a liar or a sinner who for the sake of composing differences between two rival parties says

anything of his own accord that which is calculated to bring about reconciliation between them.

(Bukhari and Muslim)

23. The Prophet was once supplicated by certain companions: "Pray to God against the idolaters, and curse them." "I have been sent only as a mercy to all mankind, and have not been sent to curse any of them," was the Prophet's reply. (Muslim)

24. Whoso curses one wilfully, the curse will return upon him. (Tirmizi and Abu Dawud)

25. In one of the Prophet's journeys, a woman of the Ansars was riding on a camel. The beast roared furiously, whereupon the woman cursed it. The Prophet said: 'Take away what is upon it, and let it go away, for, (now) it is cursed (and thou must have no need for it). (Muslim and Abu Dawud)

26. The Prophet once passed by Abu Bakr, The Prophet's father-in-law, while he was cursing some of his slaves, and turned to him, and exclaimed: "Does a truthful, sincere man curse at all? By no means! by the God of Ka'aba." That day, Abu Bakr freed his slaves, and then came to the Prophet, (and said): 'I will never do this again.' (Baihaqi)

ANGER :

AL-QURAN

Those who restrain (their) anger and pardon men.
And Allah loves the doers of good (to others).

(Q. 3:133)

AL-HADITH

1. Verily, anger is of Satan. (Abu Dawud)

2. Who do ye imagine to be powerful or strong? asked the Prophet of his companions. "He who throws people down", they replied. "Nay? said the Prophet, "It is he who masters his anger!"

(Muslim and Abu Dawud)

3. He is not strong or powerful who throws people down, but he is strong who masters his anger.

(Bukhari and Muslim)

4. When one of you is angry while standing, let him sit down; and if his anger subsides, (then, well and good), otherwise let him lie down. (Abu Dawud)

5. A man came to the Prophet, and said: "O Prophet of God! Enjoin upon me a duty, but do not demand much of me, lest I forget (everything). The Prophet said: 'Avoid anger.' (Bukhari and Muslim)

6. A man begged of the Prophet some rule of conduct. 'Avoid anger', said the Prophet. This he repeated several times. (Bukhari)

7. Narrates Abu Huraira: Once a man asked the Prophet to give him a piece of advice. The Prophet said: Do not fall into anger. The man repeated the question. The same reply was given. The man persisted and asked for yet another advice. The Prophet again said: Do not fall into anger. (Bukhari)

8. "One who subdues anger is really a courageous man," said the Prophet. "A man of strength is not one who overpowers an opponent; but it is he who, in a moment of intense provocation, exercises restraint!"

(Bukhari and Muslim)

9. Said the Prophet: 'Anger is roused under the influence of Satan, and Satan was created out of fire,

and fire is put out by water. So, whenever you fall into anger, wash your face, hands, and feet with cold water.'

(Abu Dawud)

10. Said the Prophet: No one has taken a more bitter draught than the subduing of anger for the sake of God. (Ahmad : Musnad).

PRIDE.

Al-Qur'an

And walk not proudly on the earth, for thou canst not cleave the earth, neither shalt thou reach to the mountains in height: All this is evil, odious to thy Lord! (Q. 17:39-40)

Al-Hadith

1. He who steps along proudly shall not enter Paradise; nor a boaster. (Abu Dawud and Baihaqi)

2. God will not look, on the day of resurrection, upon him who wears long robes out of pride.

(Bukhari and Muslim)

3. Whoever has pride in his heart, even of the weight of an atom, shall not enter Paradise. A man said: 'But if one likes to have good clothes and good shoes? The Prophet said, "God is beautiful, and loves beauty. Pride is rejecting the truth, and despising men."

(Muslim, Tirmizi and Abu Dawud)

4. Your pedigree should not make you look down on others; all of you are the children of Adam. No one has any superiority over another except by the righteousness he has attained. (Baihaqi)

5. A beautiful man came to the Prophet, and said, "I love beauty, and I am myself bestowed with it,

as thou seest, and I do not like that I should be behind any one in the choice of (even) the latchet of my shoes. Is that pride? O Prophet of God!" "No" said the Prophet, "but to reject the truth, and despise men is pride." (Abu Dawud)

SUSPICION AND JEALOUSY.

Al-Qur'an

And whoever committeth a fault or a crime and then layeth it on the innocent, shall surely bear the guilt of calumny and of a manifest crime. (Q. 4:112)

O Believers! avoid frequent suspicions, for some suspicions are a crime; and pry not, neither let the one of you traduce another in his absence. Would any one of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? Surely ye would loathe it. And fear ye God: for God is ready to turn, Merciful. (Q. 49:12)

Al-Hadith

1. Said the Prophet: Abstain from suspecting the motives of others; for, suspicion is a very mean thing. Do not try to detect weaknesses in others nor steal the confidences of others only to spy on them. Neither be jealous of others, nor be envious, nor bear ill-will. Do not turn away from others. On the other hand, O! servants of God! even as God wishes, be brothers unto one another. (Bukhari and Muslim)

2. Said the Prophet: Protect yourself from the disease of jealousy. Jealousy burns out the virtues of a man even as fire burns out wood. (Abu Dawud)

3. Said the Prophet: Should you find any one superior to you in anything, do not be envious of him. On the other hand, look at those less favoured than you and feel thankful to God for what you have.

(Bukhari and Muslim)

4. Said the Prophet: Never try to detect weaknesses in others, nor give them publicity, lest God should bring to light your own weaknesses and bring you disgrace. (Tirmizi)

5. Said the Prophet: Protect yourself from that form of suspicion which has not the slightest relation to fact. Neither grow haughty, nor cultivate the habit of jealousy, or envy. Neither speak ill of others, nor indulge in eaves-dropping. You are all creatures of one God. Live as brothers unto one another. (Bukhari)

6. Said the Prophet: Should one protect the honour of another even as he would that of his own brother, his countenance will never be touched by hell fire. (Tirmizi)

DECEIT AND HYPOCRISY:

AL-QUR'AN

And plead not with us for those who are self-deceivers; for God loveth not him who is deceitful, criminal. (Q. 4:107)

Announce to the hypocrites that they shall have a painful chastisement. (Q. 4:138)

AL-HADITH

1. Says God: I am the third among two, so long as one of them does not play the other false; but when he plays him false, I depart from among them, and Satan comes in. (Abu Dawud)

2. When on the day of resurrection, God will gather those gone before and those to follow, a flag will be hoisted near every treacherous man, who shall be known by it; and it shall be said, 'This is so and so, a treacherous man! (Bukhari)

3. Restore the trusts to those who had entrusted them to your care; and deal not falsely with him who

has dealt falsely with thee. (Tirmizi)

4. The signs of a hypocrite are three. Although he fasts and prays and thinks that he is a Muslim, when he speaks, he is false; when he promises, he fails; and when he is trusted, he plays false. (Muslim)

5. There are four qualities which make of one a complete hypocrite; and whoever has one of these, has one of them until he amends himself. These are : answering trust with perfidy, lying when speaking, entering into a covenant without intending fulfilment, and exhibiting of meanness in pursuing differences.
(Tirmizi and Abu Dawud)

6. Said the Prophet : "In the days to follow, there will arise men who will deceive the world in the name of religion. Clothed in sheep-skin for a sign of gentility and with a tongue sweeter than sugar, they will possess the hearts of wolves." (Tirmizi)

7. O God ! purify my heart from (all) hypocrisy and my work from (all) show, and my tongue from (all) falsehood, and my eyes from (all) deception; for, verily, Thou knowest the deceitful of eyes and what (men's) breasts do hide. (Baihaqi)

HARD-HEARTEDNESS:

AL-HADITH

1. Narrates Abu Huraira : "I have heard from the Prophet saying ! The talent of mercy is not roused in the heart of one who delights in heartlessness.
(Tirmizi and Ahmed)

2. Said the Prophet : Do not express joy at another's suffering. Who knows God might free him from it and instead impose it on you. (Tirmizi)

3. Narrates Abu Huraira : A person came to the Prophet and complained of his hard-heartedness. Said

the Prophet : "Learn to fondle the head of an orphan child and practice the habit of feeding the poor."

(Ahmed : Musnad)

MISERLINESS AND GREED:

Al-Qur'an

Fear God, then, with all your might and hear and obey, and give alms for your own weal; for such as are saved from their own greed, shall prosper.

If ye lend God a generous loan, He will double it to you and will forgive you, for God is All Thankful, All-Clement.

He knoweth alike the hidden and the manifest: The Mighty, the Wise ! (Q. 64:16-18)

And let not those who are niggardly of what God hath vouchsafed them in his bounty think that this will be good for them—Nay, it will be bad for them—

That of which they have been niggard shall be their collar on the day of resurrection. (Q. 3:175-176)

What thinkest thou of him who beliieth faith ?

He it is who thrusteth away the orphan

And stirreth not others up to feed the poor.

Woe to those who pray,

But in their prayer are careless;

Who make a shew of devotion

But refuse help to the needy. (Q. 107:1-7)

Lest ye distress yourselves if good things escape you and be over joyous for what falleth to your share. God loveth not the presumptuous, the boasting, who are covetous themselves and incite others to covetousness.

(Q. 57:23-24)

Al-Hadith

1. Said the Prophet: A man of charitable disposition lives close to God and also close to God's creatures,

and also close to heaven and further off from hell, whereas the miser remains at a distance both from God and God's creatures and is close to hell and away from heaven. Without doubt, the prayers of an ignorant man of charity are more acceptable to God than the prayers of a miser who is regular in prayers.

(Bukhari and Muslim)

2. Said the Prophet : Greed and miserliness and faith do not subsist together in a heart.

(Nasai and Abu Dawud)

3. "Said the Prophet : A deceitful person, a miser and he who upbraids for favours done by him never enter heaven. (Tirmizi)

4. If the son of Man had two vast plains full of wealth, he would yet long for a third, and nothing fills the innermost part of him but dust.

(Bukhari and Muslim)

5. What I fear most for you are passion for wealth, greed, immodesty, and mischief-making. They will lead you astray. (Razin)

6. Ka'ab bin Iyaz narrates: I have often heard the Prophet say: Every people is put on its test through something, and the thing which will put my people on their test is wealth. (Tirmizi)

7. Said the Prophet : When you notice a person is getting the good things of the world (wealth and power) on a lavish scale even as he desires, notwithstanding his wickedness, take it for granted that he is heading towards an eventual fall. Having made this observation, the Prophet recited the verse of the Qur'an :

"And when they had forgotten their warnings,
We set open to them the gates of all things,
Until, as they were rejoicing in our gifts,
We suddenly laid hold upon them and lo !
They were plunged into despair." (Q. 6:44)

DISHONESTY ETC.

AL-HADITH

1. He who claims what is not his is not of us. Let him take his place in the fire (of Hell). (Muslim)

2. The Prophet of God came to a heap of corn in a market, and thrust his hand into it. His fingers felt damp. He said 'what is this, O master of corn?' The man said: "O Prophet of God ! rain fell upon it." The Prophet said: "why dost thou not then keep (the wet portion of) it above the dry corn, so that men may see it. He who deceives, is not of us." (Muslim)

3. Dishonesty appears not in a people but God casts dread in their hearts; nor adultery spreads among a people but there are numerous deaths also among them; nor do a people stint (their) measure and balance but (their) provision is cut off from them; and no people rule unjustly but there is also bloodshed among them; and no people break their covenant but (their) enemy is placed in authority over them. (Malik)

4. The Prophet condemned alike the giver of bribes, and the taker of bribes in deciding cases.

(Abu Dawud and Tirmizi)

5. He whom we have appointed an officer and for whom we have provided a provision, if he takes anything after that, he is a transgressor. (Abu Dawud)

IMMORALITY:

AL-QUR'AN

Have nought to do with adultery; for it is a foul thing and an evil way : (Q. 17:33)

Force not your female slaves into sin, in order that ye may gain the casual fruitions of this world, if they wish to preserve their modesty. Yet if any one compel them, then Verily to them, after their compulsion, will God be Forgiving, Merciful. (Q. 24:33)

AL-HADITH

1. Observed the Prophet: whenever a calamity

befalls a centre of population, take it for granted that immorality is rampant in that place. (Dailami)

2. Said the Prophet: The market place is a place of temptation. Do not stay there unnecessarily and always protect yourself from casting lewd glances at others. (Hakim)

3. Said the Prophet: He or she who casts a lewd glance at another or allows himself or herself to be attracted likewise both meet the displeasure of God.
(Dailami)

4. Said the Prophet: He who entices another's wife is not of us. (Abu Dawud)

5. Said the Prophet: A grievously heinous sin in the estimation of God is to commit adultery with a woman living in one's neighbourhood.
(Bukhari and Muslim)

UNBECOMING DRESS:

6. Said the Prophet: The woman who puts on a dress through which the contours of her body are open to another's gaze, she will rise on the day of resurrection in a naked form. (Bukhari)

7. Said the Prophet: I look with repugnance on a man who puts on the dress of a female, and a woman who puts on the dress of a male person. Beware! Do not let such people enter your house. (Bukhari)

8. Said the Prophet: Protect the private parts of your body. Neither look at the private parts of others nor let them look at your own. (Dailami)

CLASS OR RACIAL PREJUDICE:

AL-HADITH

1. Said the Prophet: He is not of us who incites class prejudice or fights for class interests or dies in its pursuit. (Bukhari and Muslim)

2. Said the Prophet: Once a person raised the cry of his family distinction and of his community. The Prophet remarked: Stop this slogan. It is a very harmful thing. (Bukhari)

3. Said the Prophet: The worst form of class prejudice is to support one's community even in tyranny.
(Baihaqi)

4. Said the Prophet: He who knowingly lends support to tyranny is outside the pale of Islam.
(Tabrani)

Said the Prophet: Seek refuge from the curses of the oppressed to whatever community he or they may belong, for, the portals of God are always open for the oppressed. (Abu Dawud, Tirmizi and Nasai)

God always allows a respite to the oppressor to allow him the opportunity to mend his ways. But when the hour arrives to grip him, then nothing avails him. (Bukhari and Muslim)

PROHIBITED:—*Food and Drink and Gambling etc.*

AL-QURAN

O ye true believers, come not to prayer when ye are drunken, but wait till ye can understand what ye utter. (Q. 4:46)

O ye who believe! forbid not the good things which God has made lawful for you; go not beyond this limit. God loveth not those who outstep it.

And eat of what God hath given you for food, that which is lawful and wholesome, and fear God, in whom ye believe. (Q. 5:87-88)

They will ask thee concerning wine and games of chance. Say: in both is great sin, and advantage also to men; but their sin is greater than their advantage.
(Q. 2:219)

O believers! surely wine and games of chance, and statues, and the divining arrows, are an abomination of Satan's work! Avoid them that ye may prosper.

Only would Satan sow hatred and strife among, you by wine and games of chance, and turn you aside from the remembrance of God, and from prayer; will

ye not, therefore, abstain from them? Obey God and obey the Apostle, and be on your guard: but if ye turn back, know that our Apostle is only bound to deliver a plain announcement. (Q. 5:92-93)

Say: I find not in what hath been revealed to me aught forbidden to the eater to eat, except it be that which dieth of itself or blood poured forth, or swine's flesh; for this is unclean or profane, being slain in the name of other than God. But whoso shall be a forced partaker, if it be without wilfulness, and not in transgression, verily, thy Lord is Indulgent, Merciful!

(Q. 6:146)

Forbidden to you is that only which dieth of itself, and blood, and swine's flesh and that which hath been slain in the name of any other than God: but if any be forced, and neither lust for it nor wilfully transgress, then verily God is forgiving gracious. (Q. 16:116)

Usury:

O Ye who believe! devour not usury, doubling it again and again! But fear God, that ye may prosper. (Q. 3:125)

AL-HADITH,

1. Drink no intoxicant, for verily, it is at the head of all filthy actions; and beware of sinning; for, verily, with sin alights the displeasure of God.

(Ahmed: Musnud)

2. All intoxicants are forbidden.

(Bukhari and Muslim)

3. "The taking in of wine cannot cure a disease; for, it is by itself a disease. (Muslim)

4. Said the Prophet: The sale of wine and the proceeds therefrom both are *haram*—unlawful.

(Dailami)

5. Do not take wine even in a moment of forgetfulness; for, it is a key to every mischief and wickedness. (Ibn Maja)

6. Said the Prophet: The mother of all evils is wine. It is more harmful than the most harmful of sins. (Tabrani)

7. When the great God bestowed on me the office of prophethood, the first thing which I prohibited was the worship of idols. Thereafter, the things prohibited were wine, and disorder. (Tabrani)

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Section III — What to Cultivate

SENSE OF THANKFULNESS:

AL-QUR'AN

O ye who believe! eat of the good things with which we have supplied you, and give God thanks if Him it is that ye serve. (Q. 2:166)

Of old we bestowed wisdom upon LOKMAN, and taught him thus—"Be thankful to God: for whoever is thankful, is thankful for the good of his own soul; and if any shall be ungrateful—God truly is self-sufficient, worthy of all praise!" (Q. 31:11)

AL-HADITH

He who is not thankful to man is not thankful to God. (Tirmizi)

DEVOTION TO PARENTS:

AL-QUR'AN

Thy Lord hath ordained that ye worship none but Him; and to show kindness to your parents, whether one or both of them attains to old age with thee: and say not to them, "Fie!" neither reproach them; but

Speak to them both with respectful speech ; And defer humbly to them out of tenderness ; and say "Lord, have compassion on them both, even as they reared me when I was little.

Your Lord well knoweth what is in your souls ; he knoweth whether ye be righteous. (Q. 17:24-26)

AL-HADITH

1. Said the Prophet : God will reward with high places in heaven him who serves his parents devotedly.
(Dailami)

A young man came to the Prophet and asked of him permission to enlist himself in the army which was to go out on a campaign. The Prophet asked him whether his parents were alive. He said : Yes ! Then the Prophet said : "Go back and serve your parents. That is better than Jihad." (Abu Dawud)

2. Said the Prophet : What people call hell and heaven are neglect of parents and devotion to parents.
(Ibn Maja)

3. Said the Prophet : Heaven lies under the feet of the mother. (Muslim)

4. A person came to the Prophet and confessed that he had committed a very great sin and asked him to show the way to divine forgiveness. The Prophet asked him whether his mother was alive. He said, No. He then asked him whether his mother's sister was alive. He said, Yes ! The Prophet then asked him never to be unmindful of devoted service to her. (Tirmizi)

TENDERNESS & GENTILITY :

AL-QUR'AN

Praise be to God ! the Sustainer, Cherisher and Lord of all Being, the Compassionate, the Merciful !
(Q. 1:1)

Our Lord ! Thou embracest all things in mercy and knowledge. (Q. 40:7)

Do Good (to others) : Verily God loves those who do good. (Q. 2:195)

AL-HADITH

1. Said the Prophet : God is compassionate and likes compassion in his creatures. (Muslim)

2. Said the Prophet : He who is bereft of tenderness is verily bereft of every goodness. (Muslim)

3. A heartless man will be farthest away from God. (Dailami)

4. Said the Prophet : He who is gifted with the quality of tenderness, he, indeed, has obtained a share in what is good in this and in the life hereafter ; and he who is not gifted with tenderness, indeed, he has denied to himself a share in what is good in this and in the life hereafter. (Al-Baghawi)

5. Said the Prophet : Shall I speak of one who is not meant for the fire of hell or for whom the fire of hell is not meant ? One who is not severe in behaviour, is gentle, is sociable, and is of tender disposition.
(Abu Dawud and Tirmizi)

6. Narrates Anas : For 10 years, I was in the service of the Prophet at Nadina. I was then a mere lad. Not everything that I did was in the right style. I do not remember that during this long period, the Prophet ever said to me 'Oh !' once ; never rebuked me and never questioned me why I did this and why I did not do that. (Abu Dawud)

7. Said the Prophet : They will not obtain the mercy of God in whose hearts there is no feeling of kindness for others. (Bukhari and Muslim)

KINDNESS TO ANIMALS :

AL-QURAN

There is not an animal in the earth, or a flying creature flying on two wings, but they are peoples like

unto you. We have neglected nothing in the book (of our decrees). Then unto their Lord will they be gathered.” (Q. 6:38)

AL-HADITH

1. Said the Prophet: God is specially kind to those who are kindly in disposition and feel for others. O ye who dwell on earth; be kind to the creatures of God subsisting on earth; God will be then kind to you. (Abu Dawud and Tirmizi)

2. Said the Prophet: “A person was travelling by road. He felt intense thirst. At a certain place by the side of the road, he noticed a well (with a rope hanging in). He got down the well by this rope and after quenching his thirst, came out of it, when at the brink of the well, he found a dog with his tongue thrust out of its mouth and licking wet earth. The man said to himself: “This dog must be suffering from thirst, even as I suffered from it, and feeling pity for it, he at once got down by the rope into the well and taking his shoe filled it with water and held it in his mouth while coming out and held the shoe to the mouth of the dog.” Continued the Prophet: “This simple service of the man to the thirsting dog pleased God, and the man was blessed with salvation: Certain companions of the Prophet who were listening to this narrative, asked the Prophet: “Oh Prophet of God: Do we receive salvation even by removing the suffering of animals?” He replied: “Yes. There is salvation in removing the pain or suffering of every living object possessing a liver.” (Bukhari and Muslim)

3. The Prophet once visited the garden of one of his Madinite followers. He noticed a camel therein. The camel on looking at the Prophet raised a cry. It was an woeful cry even like the cry of a she camel crying at the sight of its offspring being snatched away from her, and he found tears rolling down the eyes of the animal. The Prophet went near the camel and tenderly patted it. The camel quietened. The Prophet

then enquired of his followers whose camel it was. An young Madinite came forward to say that it was his. The Prophet addressed him: "Do you fear God? God has made you the owner of this creature. The animal has complained to me that you keep it hungry and that you take more work out of it than what it can endure and cause suffering to it." (Abu Dawud)

4. Records Abdur Rahman on the authority of his father Abdullah Bin Mas'ud, a companion of the Prophet: Some of us were on a journey in the company of the Prophet. On the way, we, who were a little ahead of the Prophet, rested our eyes on a red sparrow. With her, there were two of her offspring. We caught hold of the two small birds. The sparrow grew restless and began to hover over our heads. At this moment, the Prophet joined us. He asked: who was it who had caught the offspring of the bird and caused her annoyance? Return them to her. Further up, at a certain place where we had camped for a while, we lit a fire. Close to the fire, there were holes in the earth out of which poured forth huge broods of ants. Some of them had already been burnt by the time the Prophet came to us. He asked who had burnt these creatures. We replied: 'We' The Prophet in anguish exclaimed: "None except the Creator of fire has the right to touch a living body with fire." (Abu Dawud)

The Prophet is reported to have said: "A heartless woman was put into hell because she had starved a cat to death. Neither would she offer her any food, nor did she let her free to roam about and gather worms for her food." (Bukhari and Muslim)

GOODWILL AND KINDNESS:

5. Said the Prophet: Ye people! Do not grow neglectful of exercising goodwill towards others. For, an offering of goodwill is indeed an offering of prayer to God. (Tabrani)

6. Some one asked of the Prophet : "What is the best form of Islam? Replied the Prophet: "To feed the hungry and to greet him whom he knows, and him whom he does not know, with equal cheer."

(Bukhari, Muslim and Nasai)

7. Said the Prophet: Always observe humility and show goodness to everyone, as this is pleasing to God. God does not like pride in any one. (Abu al Shaykh)

8. Said the Prophet: He who lacks goodwill towards others, can never attain piety. (Tabrani)

9. Said the Prophet: It is a command to me of my God that I should show kindness to him who has ceased to be kindly to me and to give his due to him who has refused to give me my due. (Kitab Al Riqaq)

10. Said the Prophet: When a person exerts himself to succour an unprotected or unmarried woman or a traveller in need of help, he will receive divine approbation as one who has exerted himself in the way of God. (Bukhari and Muslim)

11. Said the Prophet: None of you should regard any act of goodwill as too insignificant. Should you have nothing with you to offer a brother in need at least greet him with a goodly cheer, and add water to the gravy that you prepare for your food to increase its quantity and share it with a neighbour in need.

(Tirmizi)

SELF DENIAL :

AL-QUR'AN

Who though longing for it themselves, bestow their food on the poor and the orphan and the captive (and say):

We feed you for the sake of God: We seek from you neither recompense nor thanks." (Q. 76:8-9)

AL-HADITH

1. Suhal, a companion of the Prophet, narrates: a woman once brought a sheet of cloth to the Prophet and offered it to him as a gift saying: "Sire, I wish to cover your body with this." The Prophet accepted the offer and covered his body. In fact, he needed a sheet at the moment. One of the companions of the Prophet present said: "O Prophet of God! This is a very fine sheet of cloth. Would you bestow it on me?" "Have it", said the Prophet, and straightaway passed it on to him. When after a while, the Prophet left the gathering, some of the companions present remonstrated with the receiver of the sheet on his behaviour. They said, "You did not do well. You had noticed that the Prophet himself was in need of some covering and that it was in a moment of his need that the Prophet had accepted the gift from the lady. Nevertheless, you asked for it, for your own use, knowing full well the habit of the Prophet not to refuse a thing when asked for." The companion concerned replied: "I only asked for it for my spiritual uplift; for, I am sure that this blessed sheet will cover my body when it is lowered into my grave." (Bukhari)

2. Said the Prophet: God says! "If you are anxious to receive kindness from me, offer kindness to my creatures." (Dailami)

GOOD MANNERS :

AL-QUR'AN

O my son! Observe prayer, and enjoin the right and forbid the wrong, and be patient under whatever shall betide thee: for this is a bounden duty.

And distort not thy face at men; nor walk thou loftily on the earth; for God loveth no arrogant wain-glorious one.

But let thy pace be middling; and lower thy voice: for the least pleasing of voices is surely the voice of

asses. (Q. 31:16-18)

And the servants of the God of Mercy are they who walk upon the Earth softly; and when the ignorant address them, they reply, "Peace." (Q. 25:63)

Summon thou to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and with kindly warning: dispute with them in the kindest manner: thy Lord best knoweth those who stray from his way, and He best knoweth those who have yielded to his guidance. (Q. 16:125)

O ye who believe! enter not into other houses than your own, until ye have asked leave, and have saluted its inmates. This will be best for you: haply ye will bear this in mind.

And if ye find no one therein, then enter it not till leave be given you; and if it be said to you, "Go ye back," then go ye back. This will be more blameless in you, and God knoweth what ye do. (Q. 24:27-28)

AL-HADITH

1. Said the Prophet: Shall I suggest to you something by acting upon which you will develop a spirit of goodwill around you. It is to greet every one whom you meet. (Tirmizi)

2. Said the Prophet: One on horse-back should be the first to greet the one who is on foot.
(Bukhari and Muslim)

3. Said the Prophet: He is not of us who is not affectionate to those younger than himself and respectful to those who are older, and does not give to his relations and friends what is due to them.

(Tabrani)

4. Obtain formal permission of its occupant before you enter any house. You cannot enter even the chamber of your mother without permission. It is possible she might not be properly dressed to receive you, if you get in without announcement. (Malik)

5. Jabir, a companion of the Prophet, knocked at the door of the Prophet. From within the house the Prophet asked who it was. Jabir replied "I". The Prophet came out and said to him: what is this "I".
(Bukhari and others)

6. Whoso looks into the letter of his brother without his permission, he only looks into the fire.
(Abu Dawud)

7. When three of you meet, let not two of you step aside and whisper something to each other, as that is bound to hurt the feelings of the third. (Abu Dawud)

8. Said the Prophet: A private talk is a trust. To broadcast it is a betrayal. But should the talk relate to the murder of somebody or the looting of some one's property or the violating of the chastity of someone, to give a warning to those involved betimes is indeed not a betrayal. On the other hand, it is a righteous deed: (Abu Dawud)

9. Do not drink water in but one breath. That is the habit of a camel. (Tirmizi)

10. Do not blow your breath into the vessel from which you take your drink. (Bukhari and Muslim)

11. Said the Prophet: If a respectable person of a different community visits you, it becomes incumbent on you to show him due respect. (Ibn Maja)

12. Jabir, a companion of the Prophet, states: Never was a question addressed to the Prophet which the Prophet declined to answer. (Bukhari and Muslim)

13. Said the Prophet: Visit the sick and free the captives and feed the hungry. (Bukhari)

14. It was the practice of the Prophet to visit the sick, to follow the biers of the dead, and accept invitations from slaves. (Tirmizi)

15. Said the Prophet: Visit the person who is sick

even though he may not have visited you when you were sick. (Baihaqi)

16. Said the Prophet: Speak well of your dead, hold your tongue from speaking ill of them.
(Nasai and Abu Dawud)

17. It is incumbent on a believer to afford every comfort possible to a guest. (Bukhari and Muslim)

18. A guest should bear in mind that he should not stay with a host till his stay becomes embarrassing to the host. (Bukhari and Muslim)

19. When you hold a wedding feast, invite to it the poor and the indigent as well. That feast to which only the rich are invited or from which the poor are kept back, is a vicious feast. (Abu Dawud)

20. When you enter an assembly, do not wilfully seek a seat of prominence. (Abu Dawud)

21. When a gathering has already assembled, do not force yourself into its midst, unless the audience so desire it. (Abu Dawud and Tirmizi)

JUSTICE AND UPRIGHTNESS :

O Believers! stand up as witnesses for God by righteousness: and let not ill-will at any induce you not to act uprightly. Act uprightly. Next will this be to the fear of God, and fear ye God: verily, God is apprised of what ye do. (Q. 5: 11)

Surely Allah enjoins justice and the doing of good (to others) and the giving to the kindred, and He forbids indecency and evil and rebellion. He admonishes you that you may be mindful. (Q. 16:90)

O you who believe, be upright for Allah, bearers of witness with justice; and let not hatred of a people incite you not to act equitably. Be just; that is nearer to observance of duty. And keep your duty to Allah. Surely Allah is aware of what you do. (Q. 5:8)

O you who believe, be maintainers of justice, bearers of witness for Allah, even though it be against your own selves or (your) parents or near relations—whether he be rich or poor, Allah has a better right over them both. So follow not (your) low desires, lest you deviate. And if you distort or turn away from (truth), surely Allah is ever aware of what you do.

(Q. 4:135)

AL-HADITH

1. The best of jihad is of him who speaks a just word before a tyrannical authority.

(Tirmizi, Abu Dawud and Ibn Maja)

2. The most beloved of men in the sight of God, on the day of resurrection, and the nearest to Him, shall be the just leader; and the most hateful of men, in the sight of God, on the day of resurrection, and the farthest removed from Him, shall be the tyrannical ruler. (Tirmizi)

3. Whose has been made a guardian over the affairs of men in anything, and then shuts his door against the Muslims, or those who have been or those who stand in need (of his help), God will shut the doors of His mercy against him in his (time of) need and poverty, when he shall stand most in need of Him.

(Baihaqi)

4. Verily the just shall be near God on pulpits of light, on the right hand of the Merciful (God): those who are just in the exercise of their authority, and to their people, and to those over whom they are made guardians. (Muslim and Nasai)

5. When the judge strives to know the truth and finds it out, he has two rewards; and if he strives but makes a mistake, yet has he one reward.

(Bukhari and Muslim)

6. When two parties come to thee for decision, do not decide before thou hast heard the words of the other

as thou hast heard the words of the one ; for it is most proper that the fact should be evident to thee.

(Abu Dawud and Tirmizi)

7. Let no one judge between two parties in a suit when he is in anger. (Bukhari and Muslim)

FULFILLING OBLIGATIONS:

AL-QUR'AN

O you who believe, fulfil obligations ; (Q. 5:1)

And approach not the property of the orphan except in the best manner, until he attains his maturity.
(Q. 6:152)

AL-HADITH

1. Said the Prophet: Those who do not fulfil promises made, they will be met with dire consequences. (Abu Dawud and Baihaqi)

2. Give me to understand that six things exist in you, and I will guarantee you paradise; namely, be truthful when ye speak, and fulfil when ye promise, and restore what ye have received in trust, and guard yourselves from immodesty, and lower your eyes to the ground, and withhold your hand (from doing what is wrong). (Baihaqi)

PATIENCE IN TRIALS.

AL-QUR'AN

O ye who believe ! seek help with patience and with prayer, for God is with the patient.

And say not of those who are slain on God's path that they are Dead ; nay, they are Living ! But ye understand not.

With somewhat of fear and hunger, and loss of wealth and lives, and fruits, will we surely test you : but bear good tidings to the patient.

Who when a mischance chanceth them, say,
 "Verily we are God's and to Him shall we return:"

On them shall be blessings from their Lord and
 mercy : and these ! they are the rightly guided.

(Q. 2:148-152)

And seek help with patience and prayer : a hard
 duty indeed is this, but not to the humble. (Q. 2:45-46)

To Him, therefore, surrender yourselves, and bear
 thou good tidings to those who humble themselves.

Whose hearts, when mention is made of God, thrill
 with awe ; and to those who remain steadfast under all
 that befall them, and who observe prayer, and give
 alms of that with which we have supplied them.

(Q. 22:33-35)

We test you with evil and with good, as a test.

(Q. 2:151)

And for him who putteth his trust in Him will God
 be all-sufficient. God truly will attain his purpose. For
 everything hath God assigned a period. (Q. 65:3)

AL-HADITH

1. A believer is put on his trial by the loss of
 wealth and children. (Malik and Tirmizi)

2. Said the Prophet : It is not proper to call any
 period of time as inauspicious, since God is the con-
 troller of time. Never curse time. (Bukhari)

3. Narrates Abu Huraira : At a gathering where
 the Prophet was present, a certain person began to
 abuse Abu Bakr (the father-in-law of the Prophet) and
 Abu Bakr quietly listened to the abuse. The Prophet
 watched the scene with a mild smile on his lips. When
 the man went on in his diatribes and would not stop,
 Abu Bakr could not bear the process any longer. He
 returned a few of his compliments in his very words.
 The Prophet rose apparently dissatisfied at the turn,
 and quietly left the place. Abu Bakr felt embarrassed

and, feeling that the Prophet was not satisfied with him quickly followed him. Having reached him, he addressed the Prophet: "O Prophet of God! while the man was hurling abuse at me, you were silent; but when I tried to reply to him, you evidently felt annoyed, and came away. The Prophet said: So long as you were silent and bearing everything with patience, I noticed an angel standing by you and replying to the abuse on your behalf. But when once you yourself attempted to reply, the angel disappeared, and his place was taken by Satan. Continuing the Prophet said: "O Abu Bakr! three things there are which are veritable truths of life. One is this: "If the person who is treated unjustly bears injustice for the sake of God and declines to retaliate, then God honours him by way of recompense in this and in the life to come. The second is this: He who out of kindness and pity for one's wretchedness, opens his door of charity, God returns to him whatever was paid in a larger measure;" and the third is this: "He who stretches his hand to ask for alms from others, not because he is in dire want of it, but just to increase his possessions, God in turn decreases it." (Ahmed : Musnad)

4. Said the Prophet: The Prophet Moses once asked of God: "God! who among your creatures is the best honoured of you?" The reply was: "he who has power to retaliate, but chooses to forgive. (Baihaqi)

5. Narrates Abdullah bin Umar: "Certain person came to the Prophet and asked of the Prophet: "O Prophet of God, how often should I forgive the mistakes of my servant?" The Prophet did not give him any reply, but kept silent. The man repeated the question in the same words. The Prophet said: "Seventy times every day." (Tirmizi)

SELF RESTRAINT AND FORGIVENESS :

AL-QUR'AN

Who master their anger, and forgive others ! God loveth the doers of good. (Q. 3:133)

Moreover, good and evil are not to be treated alike. Turn away evil by what is better, and lo! he between whom and thyself was enmity, shall be as though he were a warm friend. But none attain to this save men steadfast in patience and none attain to it except the most highly favoured. (Q. 41:34-25)

If you at all retaliate, then retaliate to the same extent that he were injured; but if ye can endure patiently, best will it be for those who patiently endure.

Endure then with patience. But thy patient endurance must be sought in none but God.

(Q. 16:126-127)

And whoso beareth wrongs with patience and forgiveth—this verily is high-mindedness. (Q. 42:40)

And who, when a wrong is done them, redress themselves: Yet let the recompense of evil be only a like evil—but he who forgiveth and is reconciled, shall be rewarded by God himself; for He loveth not those who act unjustly.

And there shall be no way open against those who unjustly wrong others, and act insolently on the earth in disregard of justice. These! a grievous punishment doth await them.

And whose beareth wrongs with patience and forgiveth, this verily is (a bounden duty); a high resolve.

(Q. 42:37-41)

AL-HADITH

1. Verily, it is better that the leader should err on the side of forgiveness rather than on the side of retaliation. (Tirmizi)

2. Moses said, 'O my Lord! who is the most honoured of Thy servants in Thy sight?' God said: 'He who pardons when he has the power (to avenge himself).' (Baihaqi)

3. Narrates Abdullah bin Abbas : The Prophet once addressing a tribal chief remarked : Two of your qualities are pleasing to God. One is your sense of self-restraint, the other is your disinclination to act hastily. (Muslim)

4. Said the Prophet : Considerate action is godly in quality and a hasty one satanic. (Tirmizi)

Said the Prophet : An upright character and a balanced disposition form two of the 24 elements which constituted the equipment of a prophet. (Tirmizi)

REPENTANCE AND PURITY OF LIFE :

AL-QUR'AN

But whoever shall turn him to God after his wickedness and amend, God truly will be turned to him : for God is Forgiving, Merciful. (Q. 5:43)

Those who shall repent and believe and do good deed, for them God will change their evil deeds into good deeds, for, God is Gracious Merciful. (Q. 25:70)

O My servants, who have transgressed to your own hurt, despair not of God's Mercy, for all sins doth God forgive. Gracious, Merciful is He.
(Q. 39:54)

AL-HADITH.

1. Said the Prophet : Feeling unhappy over a wrong thing done is a clear sign of repentance.
(Dailami)

2. He is a wise person who habitually examines his heart and prepares himself for the life to come. On the other hand, he is not a wise person who yields to the dictates of his heart and yet entertains the hope of salvation. (Trimizi)

3. As far as possible continue to seek divine forgiveness. It is not meet for a believer in God to despair of Him. (Dailami)

4. Said the Prophet: Should you repent of a major sin, it remains no longer a major sin. On the other hand, if you repeatedly commit a minor sin, it indeed becomes a major sin. (Ibn Asakir)

5. Said the Prophet: Should one sin and repent and continue to sin and repent, his repentance will have no value. (Baihaqi)

6. A man came to the Prophet and asked him: How am I to know that my actions are good. Replied the Prophet: If your neighbours speak well of your actions, they should be regarded as good, and, on the other hand, if they speak ill of you, then take it that they are not good. (Ibn Maja)

PURITY:

7. Verily God is pure, and loves the pure, is cleanly and loves the cleanly, is beneficent and loves the beneficent, is generous and loves the generous.

(Tirmizi)

Certain companions of the Prophet said to him: 'We find within ourselves something which one of us would think it a great sin to speak of.' The Prophet said, 'Do ye indeed find it to be so (very grievous)?' They said, 'Yes', He said, 'That (shows) the purity of your faith.' (Muslim and Abu Dawud)

MODESTY:

Said the Prophet: Modesty is an ingredient of faith. (Bukhari: Muslim)

Modesty and faith are so closely inter-dependent that one ceases to exist without the other. (Baihaqi)

Said the Prophet: Earnestly seek from God the gifts of modesty and honesty; for these are the two virtues which will first flee away from the world. (Baihaqi)

Said the Prophet: In the utterances of former prophets, the fact is emphasised that once modesty is given the go by, one yields easily to every prompting of the heart. (Bukhari)

Said the Prophet: They have no religion who have given the go by to modesty. (Dailami)

Chapter 10

AMAL-I-SALEH

IT must be clear by now that human life, according to the Qur'an, is to express itself in a system of activity promoting peace and harmony in life, and that subject to that end in view and in conformity with the principles underlying it, man has every freedom to will and act. And there is the assurance to every individual: "On no soul do we lay a responsibility greater than it can bear."¹

According to the Quran, man has a dual responsibility to discharge. One is in relation to himself, the other, is in relation to his external world. The one is to acknowledge in thought and action what is styled as Haqullah or the right of God or what is due to God; the other is to acknowledge in like manner Haq un-nas or the rights of the external world of creation or what is due to it: The former has to express itself in a process of self-development—physical, intellectual and spiritual. In other words, man's primary responsibility is to invite God, so to say, exercise His right to dwell in the individual and urge him to use properly the balance set in his nature. The idea is in conformity with the Quranic exhortation: "Believers! If ye help God, God will help you, and set your feet firm."² The other responsibility lies in developing social conscience and in caring for the welfare of others. This is respecting in one's life and activity the rights of others. The two terms may as well be styled as "obligations to one's self" and "obligations to society." The two types of responsibilities are not to

1. Q. 2:286.

2. Q. 47:8.

be regarded as exclusive. They are merely two facets of one and the same attitude towards life, of the same activity proceeding from it and signify the character of the mind one has to develop. It is this mind which matters in determining responsibility for every human action. "Actions rest on motives,"³ says the Prophet, because motive is the index to the mind or to the manner in which the mind chooses to exercise the balance set in the nature of man and expresses itself in action. It is why every stress is laid on purity of motives. And this purity is promoted by a proper exercise of the "balance" aiming at a harmonious blending of the Haq Allah with the Haq an-Nas or of the obligations to self with the obligations to society, or by identifying one's own interests with the interests of the world at large. This is Amal-i-Saleh or righteous work.

The culture of Islam is but an expression of this process. The directive inspiring the process is summed up in the words of the Prophet: "Respect the ways of God and be affectionate to the family of God."⁴ The obligations to one's self and the obligations to others are here placed side by side to form integral aspects of one's activity in life. Whatever one's role either in one's family circle, or in society at large, or even in his private closet, one has to be mindful of this dual responsibility. To be so mindful is 'khair' or good, and not to be so mindful is 'sharr' or 'evil'. The distinction is to be upheld in every sphere of life's activity—physical, intellectual, spiritual, social, economic and political. It is this distinction which underlies also the principle distinguishing the 'halal,' the permissible or the lawful from the 'haram' or unlawful, and which also forms the basis of the injunction calling upon man to enjoin the right conduct and forbid the wrong. The distinction applies to individual, as well as, to cor-

3. Bukhari: 'Kaifa Bad'al-Wahi,'

4. Baihaqi: 'Kitab al-Iman, Shu'ab al-Iman.'

porate life, and cuts across both Haq Allah and Haq an-Nas. Righteous work in the context of the commandment, "Believe and work righteously," has no other meaning for man except to bear this distinction in mind in all activity, whether it concerns his own self or his relations with his fellow beings or his conduct towards dumb creatures. The personal virtues of kindness, purity, chastity, love, affection, truth, respect for covenants, forbearance, forgiveness, trustworthiness, justice, mercy and the like are not mere luxuries to be indulged in at convenience but are indispensable for a righteous living. And the opposite qualities such as hate, cruelty, indecency, fornication, adultery, dishonesty, falsehood, treachery, hypocrisy, spite, defection, unfaithfulness, and exploitation of the weak which work for the disintegration of society are not only vices but positive sins in Islam, and are therefore not merely to be strenuously avoided but firmly discountenanced.

Such is the wide interpretation given by the Qur'an to Amel-i-Saleh or righteous work—work that helps man to live in peace with himself and in peace with his fellow beings and the rest of creation. To so live is to live in Islam which itself means 'Peace'—peace realized in the devotion of all our faculties to the Will of God which, as we have explained already, is nothing but the law of life devised in His infinite goodness to work for harmony expressive of the unity of existence. The duty of man is to see that every little act of his conforms to this law of harmonious living.

"Verily my prayers, and my sacrifice and my life and my death are all for Allah".⁵

Life thus viewed, every action of man assumes a spiritual significance. It is this significance which distinguishes Amal-i-saleh from every other form of human activity: The spirit underlying it, whatever the

5. Q. 6:163.

field of expression, the Haq Allah or Haq an-Nas, is the result of a harmonious interaction of the twin spiritual faculties in man—the sense of God, and the sense of fellow-feeling. It is this which supplies the emotional background to the display in every situation of a third faculty, the sense of “balance set in his nature,”—essentially an intellectual force—and gives to the resultant action the quality of righteousness which the Qur'an speaks of. To pursue the path of righteousness or of Amal-i-Saleh is in reality to respect the ways of Allah, and to show affection to the ‘family of Allah’ or in the phrase of Carlyle to join to the “Great law of the world.” It is along this path that we meet the Salehin and the Muttaqin, the Sabirin, the Ulul Absar and the Ulul Albab and the rest of the noble types of men and women mentioned in the chapter on Equipment, who form the very salt of the earth. Whenever the devout Muslim raises his voice in his prayer to God to say: “show us the right path, the path of those whom Thou hast blessed,” it is this path of true righteousness or Amal-i-Saleh that he desires to be shown, and guided therein. The highest aim which a nation or community may, on the analogy of the individual, aspire to is not material or political superiority over others as seems to have had a fascination for ambitious people throughout history. The very idea of a distinction on this basis between one community and another is excluded from the concept of international life favoured of Islam, the concept of a “fold, every member of which shall be a shepherd or keeper unto every other.” The criterion of superiority must lie in the character of the corporate righteousness displayed. Prayed the Prophet both for himself and his followers:

“O Allah! Make us guides in the path of Life, and keep us guided ourselves therein—neither going astray, nor leading astray.”⁶

An attitude such as this is possible when one has

6. *Hisn-i-Hisin*,

blended his sense of Haq Allah with that of Haq an-Nas, an attitude in the development of which every one is recommended by the Prophet to seek divine help.

"O Allah ! I seek Thy refuge from misleading others, and from being misled by others; from betraying others into error, and from being betrayed into error by others; from doing any wrong to others; and from being wronged by others; and from drawing others into ignorance, and from being drawn into ignorance by others."⁷

"O Allah ! I seek Thy refuge from any wrong that I may do to others, and from any wrong that others may do to me; from any harshness that I may show to others, and from any harshness that others may show to me; and from any sin that Thou mayst not forgive."⁸

I have quoted from the prayers of the Prophet just to reach by the quickest route the mind favoured of the Qur'an; for, a prayer is the surest index to the mind of one who prays. It affords an insight into the working of his mind, his thoughts and feelings and the very object of his life. There is no prevarication, no hiding or suppression of truth, no luxurious display of poetic fancy when man stands face to face with the Creator of his being to lay bare before Him his heart, and give an account of his mundane struggles, his achievements and disappointments, and to ask of him the things that matter. His prayer, at such a moment, is an expression of a pressing feeling, and is for that reason naturally simple and direct. The note that he strikes in his outpourings points to the character of the mind that he has developed.

In Islam, the prayer that one offers whether singly or in congregation, whether at the appointed hours of devotion, or at any sudden call or urge from within to turn to his Lord in the midst of his daily work, is all couched in the phraseology of the Qur'an or that of the Prophet's own utterances preserved in the Hadith. Even when the suppliant expresses himself in his own tongue, the form of prayer is dictated by the same source. The

7. *Hisn-i-Hisin*.

8. *Ibid*.

same attitude towards his Master, the same conception behind the words used, the same spiritual atmosphere generated by them are revived in his mind, and nothing that he says is not covered by the teachings of the Qur'an and the example of the Prophet.

"O Allah! Make Islam most pleasing to me",⁹ is one of the Prophet's prayers. It is a brief utterance; yet, how comprehensive! The suppliant here asks for the path of Islam to be smoothed for him, to be made most pleasing,—the path of Islam which is the path of devotion, of strenuous struggle with evil, and of bringing our own will into accord with the Supreme Will, or of devoting all our talents to the service of the highest in life. He asks for a life disciplined in the ways of Allah or the laws intrinsic in our nature working for peace. It is a duty in the discharge of which few there are who can claim not to have faltered. Yet, one who cares to seek perfection is to ask of God to make even such a trying task most pleasing to him.

It is towards this end that every prayer of Islam is directed. Mark the character of the following two prayers which have found their way into the regular daily worship of a Muslim. One is the common prayer of Islam and the most compulsory with which every service begins, and the other is what enters into his vespers :

Praise is only for God, Sustainer, Cherisher and Lord of
all Being!
The Compassionate, the Merciful!
King on the day of recompense!
Thee only do we serve and Thee only do we ask for help,
Direct us to the straight path,
The path of those to whom thou hast been gracious,
Of those who have not earned Thy displeasure, or have
not gone adrift. Amen!"¹⁰

This prayer repeated several times every day serves as a recurring reminder to a Muslim of the

9. *Hisn-i-Hisin.*

10. Q. 1:1-7.

character of life that he is to pursue—a life of righteous conduct. The same note is struck in his vespers :

“O Allah ! Guide me to be of those whom thou hast guided and preserve me to be of those whom Thou hast preserved, and befriend me to be of those whom Thou hast befriended, and bless me in what Thou doth grant me, and protect me from the evil of everything that Thou may'st prescribe for me; for surely, Thou alone canst prescribe what thou desireth, and none can over-rule Thee. Surely, he whom Thou befriendeth is never disgraced. Blessed art Thou, our Lord, the Exalted !”¹¹

It must be noted that every Islamic prayer is a resolve to conform with Divine aid to the ways of God or Sunnat Allah, in order that one might discharge one's obligations to one's own self and one's obligations to others—the Haq Allah and the Haq an-Nas.

“I ask of thee qualities which move Thy grace and forgiveness. I ask of thee protection from doing harm to any one and I ask of thee the chance of doing good to everyone.”¹²

“O Allah ! I ask of thee steadfastness in every pursuit, I ask of Thee the intent for good action and the power to thank Thee for Thy benevolence and to render Thee devoted service. I ask of Thee the tongue that speaketh truth, and the mind that erreth not and the gift of true fellow-feeling. I seek Thy refuge from the evil of everything that thou knoweth; and I ask of Thee the good that lieth in everything that Thou knoweth; and I seek Thy refuge from every sin of which Thou hast knowledge. And verily, Thou knoweth all that we cannot know.”¹³

Note the spirit of the following prayer :

“O Allah ! Improve my spiritual life, for, that is to be my refuge; and purify my material life, for, I have to live it, and prepare me for the life to which I shall have to return; and keep me alive till it is good for me to be alive, and call me back, when it is good for me to die,

11. *Hish-i-Hisin* 12. *Ibid.* 13. *Ibid.*

Lengthen my life in every goodly state, and turn death into bliss before any evil state supervenes.”¹⁴

Death should thus have no terror for man. What one should fear is wickedness or evil life; and it is against this that one has to seek Divine protection. In whatever man may ask for, he is never to forget his primary need for purity of life.

“O Allah! Bless me always with the joy of Thy sight and the pleasure of beholding Thy countenance, unharmed by anything harmful, and undisturbed by anything disturbing.”¹⁵

“O Allah! I ask of Thee a pure life, and a pure death, and a returning unto Thee that shall not call for reprehension or disgrace.”¹⁶

The prayers given above, as all others contained in the Qur'an and the Hadith, reveal the yearning of a type of mind every move of which is directed by an all absorbing sense of God, on the one hand, and by an equally powerful sense of responsibility resting on it, on the other, to render in a life hereafter an account of its activity in the present.

The thought of this life hereafter which according to the Qur'an is “Life Indeed”, is to be kept so constantly in view that the present is to be regarded as but a preparation for it, and is, for that reason, raised, as already observed, to the position of a cardinal belief in Islam, as important to the life of man as every other cardinal belief, to be expressed in righteous work or Amal-i-Saleh.

14. *Hisn-i-Hisin*.

15. *Ibid*.

16. *Ibid*.

Chapter 11

ISLAMIC POLITY

IN the preceding pages an attempt has been made to afford a bird's-eye view of the type of mind which it is the purpose of the Qur'an to evolve—a mind which gives to the world its 'Salehin' and 'Muttaqin', its 'Muqsitin' and 'Muflehin', its 'Sadiqin' and 'Siddiqin', and the rest of the order referred to already, who live and work in full consciousness of the sense of God developed in them. It is to a band of people with a mind so moulded—the comrades or companions of the Prophet, and those who followed in their foot-steps—that the Qur'an addresses the appellation 'Ummatan wasata', a community standing midway between two extremes, or living a balanced life, and serving as a "pattern unto others, even as the Prophet was a pattern unto them."¹ The term but denotes the character which this mind has to assume on the organizational or corporate plane.

It was this Ummatan wasata which the Prophet organized into a state, the very first state in Islam, an organization which was intended to serve in the fullness of time as a nucleus of a world order. When we say that the Prophet organized his people into a state, we do not mean to suggest that this was any basic aim of the Prophetic mission. A growing community has at one stage or other to assume the functions of a state where there is already no state to discharge them. What we mean is that he had time only to lay the foundations of it by giving them the requisite training in righteous thought and living in an organized manner, leaving the task of raising an appropriate edifice thereon to those

1. Q. 2:137,

coming after, in accordance with their varying needs and circumstances. His primary or immediate concern was to develop the personality of the individual and equip him with the talent to live in peace with himself and in peace with his external world of relations. And this, he did in the sure confidence that with the creation of the right type of men and women, a political structure appropriate to the corporate living of such individuals would evolve itself as a matter of course.

From the circumstances of its birth and its early nourishment, it is by no means easy to designate this state by any one of the terms applied to the different forms of government known to history. It was certainly not theocracy; for here, there was no sacerdotal caste to exercise political authority under the immediate direction of God, a form of government which prevailed particularly among the Israelites till the time of Saul. The Qur'an cannot countenance sacerdotalism in any form. The nascent state left behind by the Prophet did undoubtedly develop during the regimes of the first round of Khalifs, the 'Rashidin,' certain distinct qualities foreshadowing in practice the leading aspects of a political and economic democracy, but in its theoretic approach to its democratic method of government, it would not accept the basic postulate of modern democracy that the sovereignty of a state vested in its people. The Qur'an proclaims that all sovereignty belongs to God and to God alone.² For that same reason, the new state could not be styled kingship either, much less a dictatorship, for, neither the Prophet nor the Khalifs (Rashidin) would assume a title specifically reserved for God, or claim the right to dictate. The Prophet had simply to follow, even as every other member of the organization, the law or regulations revealed to him from time to time,³ or as suggested themselves to him in consultation with his companions.⁴ A like attitude was observed by the Rashidin, although in their attempt

2. Q. 2:101; 3. Q. 7:101; 4. Q. 3:153.

to deal with new situations not covered specifically by either the Quranic regulations or the practice of the Prophet, they made a careful use of the principle of consultation favoured of the Qur'an, of regulating their affairs by 'counsel among themselves.'⁵ The principle is styled *Ijtehad*. The body of people consulted by them, the *Shura*, were men of known integrity and experience enjoying the confidence of the people, the *Ijma*.

How then are we to designate a state whose function was to maintain by democratic methods the supremacy of law, the basic part of which as laid down in the Qur'an was regarded as divinely ordained? The answer is to be sought in the specific purpose which this basic part of the State law had to serve. From its very nature, it was there essentially to supply a distinctive cultural background or a moral tone to the corporate life of the Ummat or the Muslim community. It was against this ideological background that all secular affairs were to be regulated, not by any theocratic machinery, but by counsel among its members. The form given to the new state in the time of the Rashidin was no doubt that of a democracy; but it was a democracy clearly distinguishable in its outlook and responsibility from the earlier types, the Athenian and the Roman, designed primarily in the interests of privileged classes. The voice of the 'demos' composing the republic of Athens, for instance, had its counterpart in the "Ijma" or consensus of opinion among those who formed the Arabian republic. The difference lay in the sense of responsibility with which the voice of the people was exercised and the administration of the state was carried on. The responsibility of the people of the Arabian republic in giving their assent to any act of administration was in the first instance, no doubt, to themselves as in Athens, but it was to be coloured and directed by their responsibility to the law of life revealed through the Qur'an, in other words, by their sense of an ultimate responsibility to a higher

5. 3:153.

power than themselves viz., God, the true Sovereign of their state and the fountain-head of all their basic law. That sense had to govern the conduct of the 'Shura' or the body of the Khalif's counsellors, and the conduct of the Khalif himself, as of every officer of the state appointed by him in every department of administration.

The new republic of Arabia was thus a republic of Godfearing people and its administration was carried on, in accordance with the Quranic notions of justice and equity, by a band of *Salehin*, by men of known upright character affording the fullest opportunity to every citizen to live an upright life. The mere fact that the background against which this republican life was sustained is traceable to the teachings of a religion cannot justify its being designated as a religious state or theocracy. In fact, no state, however professedly secular, can endure without some sort of an ethical or spiritual background to its activity. Only, it has to keep the distinction clear between the principles which form the background and the manner and method of putting them into execution. The latter is essentially a secular function, whereas the former is there to give a particular cultural or moral tone to it.

The distinction is implicit in the Quranic view of life which divides its function into the fulfilment of 'Haq Allah' and 'Haq al Nas' or 'Haq al Ibad', 'obligation to God', and 'obligation to society'. The former, the 'Haq Allah', such as beliefs, prayers, and the need for purity of mind and body are primarily personal concerns of the individual, unless a deliberate public disregard of them should prove a source of nuisance to others. The latter, the 'Haq al Nas' or obligations to society, on the other hand, form the essential jurisdiction of the state. These relate largely to secular affairs and secular relationships between man and man and have naturally to be regulated by secular means or methods of administration. The "Rashidin" in view

of the nascent stage through which the 'Ummat' had to pass, did keep a form of patriarchal watch on the observance of the 'Haq Allah' and whenever necessary even interpreted them in their application to new conditions of life in consultation with their compeers. But this by no means constituted their office into a spiritual headship of the community. The 'Haq Allah' and 'Haq al Nas' were binding on the Khalif as they were on any other members of society, the approach to the one reflecting itself in the approach to the other.

Mark the view which Abu Bakr took of his office as the first Khalif of the new state. Said he in his very first address to his people :

"My fellowmen ! I call God to witness. I never had any wish to hold this office; never aspired to possess it; neither in secret nor in the open did I ever pray for it. I have agreed to bear this burden lest mischief might raise its head. Else, there is no pleasure in leadership. On the other hand, the burden placed on my shoulders is such as I feel I have not the inherent strength to bear and so cannot fulfil my duties except with Divine help.

"You have made me your leader, although I am in no way superior to you. Co-operate with me when I go right; correct me when I err; obey me so long as I follow the commandments of God and his Prophet; but turn away from me when I deviate,"⁶

It was an experiment in democracy which the first Khalif here promises to embark upon inspired by an ever present sense of God in him. But he died within three years of his accession to the Khilafat. His work was taken up by 'Umar and energetically pursued. But even he had not many years to give to the experiment. He was assassinated by a migrant from Persia in the 10th year of his regime. After him came Usman followed by Ali both of whom were assassinated in turn apparently as a sequence to partizan rivalry. It is

6. Tabari: p. 1948 : Annals of 11th Hijra.

these first four Khalifs who are styled the 'Rashidin', the rightly guided. The period covered by their Khilafat does not occupy more than thirty years. It is this period which may properly be called the period of democratic experiment in Islamic polity, the spirit underlying it rising to a climax in the time of 'Umar and reaching its final susidence in the assassination of Ali.

The state was regarded by the Rashidin as a trust from God to be run for the benefit of the people as a whole. No one had any special privilege attached to his person. The Khalif was at best the first among equals; so much so, that when food and cloth had to be rationed in Madina, he had but to receive his share just as an ordinary citizen. Every man and every women had the right to question him on any matter touching the state affairs. No one was above the law. 'Umar had once to appear before a subordinate judge appointed by him just to answer a charge. Similarly, Ali had to plead a case of his against a Jew, and it was the Jew who was awarded the decree. The economic system of life formulated by the Qur'an laying a special emphasis on the uplift of the economically depressed, under which a special levy was to be collected from the rich for the relief of the poor, was rigidly enforced by the state. The Quranic injunctions governing the status of women as economic units, functioning in their own individual rights, were scrupulously respected and upheld. Security of life and of property, and freedom of conscience were guaranteed to non-Muslim minorities who were styled *Zimmi*, "the protected of God and the Prophet". "Beware! on the day of judgment" had the Prophet proclaimed. "I shall myself be the complainant against him who wrongs a *Zimmi* or lays on him a responsibility greater than he can bear or deprives him of anything that belongs to him."⁷ Indeed, so mindful was he of their welfare

7. Al-Mawardi : al-Ahkam as Sultaniyah, Ch. XIII.

that a few moments before he expired, the thought of the Zimmi came to him. He said: "Any Muslim who kills a Zimmi has not the slightest chance of catching even the faintest smell of Heaven. Protect them: They are my Zimmi."⁸ In a moment of like remembrance, 'Umar, as he lay assassinated, exclaimed: "To him who will be Khalif after me, I commend my wish and testament! The Zimmi are protected of Allah and the Prophet. Respect the covenants entered into with them, and when necessary fight for their interests and do not place on them a burden or responsibility which they cannot bear."⁹

"When Jerusalem submitted to the Caliph 'Umar," states Sir Thomas Arnold in the *Preaching of Islam*, "the following conditions were drawn up:

"In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate, the following are the terms of capitulation, which I, Omar, the servant of God, the commander of the Faithful, grant to the people of Jerusalem. 'I grant them security of lives, their possessions, and their children, their churches, their crosses, and all that appertains to them in their integrity; and their lands and to all, of their religion. Their churches therein shall not be impoverished, nor destroyed, nor injured from among them; neither their endowments, nor their dignity; and not a thing of their property; neither shall the inhabitants of Jerusalem be exposed to violence in following their religion; nor shall one of them be injured.'"¹⁰

Adds Arnold:

"In company with the Patriarch, Omar visited the holy places, and it is said while they were in the Church of the Resurrection, as it was the appointed hour of prayer, the Patriarch bade the Caliph offer his prayers there, but he thoughtfully refused saying that if he were to do so, his followers might afterwards claim it as a place of Muslim worship."¹¹

8. Bukhari: 'Kitab ad-Diyyat', p. 137, Cairo.

9. Bukhari: Kitab al-Jihad and Kitab al-Munaqib, Fadail Usman.

10. Sir Thomas Arnold: *The Preaching of Islam*.

11. Ibid.

In the conduct of war, even as in the other spheres of activity, the Rashidin never lost sight of humanitarian considerations enjoined by the Qur'an. "The self-restraint of the conquerors and the humanity which they displayed in their campaigns", observes Arnold, "must have excited profound respect and secured a welcome for an invading army that was guided by such principles of justice and moderation as were laid down by the Caliph Abu Bakr for the guidance of the first expedition into Syria :

"Be just ; break not your plighted faith ; mutilate none ; slay neither children, old men nor women ; injure not the date palm nor burn it with fire, nor cut down any fruit bearing tree ; slay neither flocks nor herds nor camels, except for food ; perchance you may come across men who have retired into monastries ; leave them and their works in peace."¹²

The experiment of the Rashidin which certainly displayed in that dark period of human history qualities such as these of a model state, 'Ummatan wasata', might have grown by now, had it had a free life, into a veritable "fold" of the Prophet's vision, indeed developed into a world-federation of autonomous communities, every constituent member whereof being a "shepherd or keeper unto every other." But that was not to be. The tragedy of Islam is that this tender plant was not allowed to grow. It was cut down by the hands of its own followers within a few years of the passing away of the Prophet, and replaced in the very name of his Faith by varying forms of despotism. But while it lasted, however brief the period of its existence, it functioned, at least during its brilliant moments, consciously as an Ummatan wasata.

It is not the purpose of this chapter to survey the march of events in the life of the Islamic peoples through the intervening centuries. The Arab State founded by the Prophet had under the Rashidin grown

12. Sri Thomas Arnold : *The Preaching of Islam*.

into an empire, lending to the office of the Khalif, in a varying degree, moments of glory and eclipse, eventually opening the door to the formation of an endless series of principalities and empires lasting for varying lengths of time. But the fact stands that the Rashidinian form was an isolated event, and nowhere and at no time was it given the opportunity to develop on its original lines. Monarchy, in one form or another, benevolent or otherwise, invariably supported by a feudal sub-structure, was even till modern times the staple form of a state, wherever found, during this lengthy period. These states had however one or two redeeming features about them. The supremacy of the basic law of Islam was and had to be maintained even by the most dominant despots who ever ruled over them. Another feature which continued to distinguish Muslim society even in the days of turmoil was the sense of social democracy which Islam had developed from the very beginning among the followers of the Faith. It is these two assets of Islam which have given a continuity of existence to Islamic society through the ebbs and flows of their political life, and promise to furnish a durable base on which the edifice of a stable polity may be raised now or in the days to come.

The task is no doubt fraught with difficulties. The rise of geographical nationalities among Muslims everywhere, on the one hand, and the medievalism fostered by the Ulama or doctors of religion, on the other, have contributed in no small measure to a variety of internal tensions in the body of Islam. These are incidental to the stage of transition. The general trend among Muslims is to march abreast of the times, and, in this, the ideology of Islam of 'saleh' or righteous society, if invoked in the right spirit, might enable them to give to their polity the stability that it needs, and make it a factor for progress and the peace of the world.

The prospect seems favourable. The world is now

marching towards a democratic order of life for all mankind—a purpose so dear to the Qur'an. It has begun, notwithstanding the impediments blocking the way, to socialize the good things of the earth—another purpose sponsored by the Qur'an. The world of science is unravelling for man the hidden forces of nature with intensive avidity and pressing them into his service—a crying call issuing forth and reverberating from every corner of the Qur'an. There should, therefore, be no difficulty for Muslim countries in falling into line with these leading trends of the modern world. Should they do so with little reference to their spiritual moorings, which, as the Qur'an points out are fixed in the very nature of man and possess an universal appeal for him, or just to advance their own interests, unmindful of the world purpose of the Qur'an, the well-being of all humanity, they will go the way the rest of the world are going and share the consequences. If on the other hand, they should evolve for their respective countries a system of polity which should enable the 'Salehin', or the upright type among their people, to be at the helm of affairs in every sphere of administration, even as the Qur'an desires, a polity which shall enable them to cultivate, on the group plane, the sense of God on which the Qur'an lays its supreme stress as the mainspring of all life sustaining activity, even as they have to do on the individual plane, in other words, lay an even emphasis on the 'Haq Allah' and 'Haq al Nas' or obligations to themselves and obligations to mankind, they may still develop into an 'Ummatan wasata', and serve as a balancing factor between the exaggerated opposites of the world of today.

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SOURCE MATERIAL

Section I—The Goal of Social Organisation :

AL-QUR'AN

O ye mankind! surely we have created you a

male and female, and made you tribes and families that you may recognise each other; surely the noblest of you in the sight of God is the one among you most mindful of his duty. God is Knowing, Fully awake.

(Q. 49:13)

AL-HADITH

1. Said the Prophet: All creatures of God form the Family of God and he is the best loved of God who loveth best His creatures. (Baihaqi)

2. Said the Prophet: O Lord! Lord of my life and of everything in the Universe! I affirm that all human beings are brothers unto one another."

(Ahmed and Abu Dawud)

3. Said the Prophet: Respect the ways of God and be affectionate to the Family of God. (Baihaqi)

EVERY ONE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE WELFARE OF EVERY OTHER:

4. Said the Prophet: Islam demands a united life for man. (Kunuzul Haqaiq)

5. Said the Prophet: Mankind is a fold every member of which is a shepherd unto every other, and will be accounted for the welfare of the entire fold.

(Bukhari: Kitab al-Iman)

6. Narrates Ibn Umar: Said the Prophet: Every one of you is a shepherd and will be questioned about the well-being of his fold. So, the Imam or the Head of the State will be questioned about the well-being of the people of the State. Every man is a shepherd unto his family and will be questioned about the well-being of every member of it. Every woman is a shepherd unto the family of her husband and will be questioned about the well-being of every member thereof; and

every servant is a shepherd unto his master and will be questioned about the property of His master, and his well-being. The narrator says : I heard of this from the Prophet, and I think he also said that every son is a shepherd unto his father and will be accountable for the safety of his father's property, and his well-being.
(Bukhari and Muslim)

7. The shepherd keeps his watch in night hours and in the day time. (Kunuzul Haqaiq)

8. A good man is he who promotes the good of others. (Kunuzul Haqaiq)

9. None among you is a believer in God unless he wishes for his brother what he wishes for himself.
(Bukhari)

10. Ma'ad bin Jabal asked of the Prophet what form of faith was good or by what kind of action was such a faith acquired? Said the Prophet in reply : "Your likes and your dislikes should be for God only ; and every moment of your life, you should feel you are living in the presence of God." Ma'ad asked : what else? The Prophet continued, "and wish for others what you wish for yourself and dislike for others what you dislike for your own self." (Ahmed : Musnad)

11. He who serves mankind is deserving of the greatest reward. (Kunuzul Haqaiq)

Section II—Human Rights

AL-HADITH

EQUALITY :

Addressing a gathering during his last Haj, said the Prophet : O people! Your god is but one, and the father of each one of you is but one. The Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab, the fair coloured over the black coloured, or the black coloured over the fair

coloured, except by the righteousness he displays in life. (Ahmed : Musnad)

FREEDOM FROM BONDAGE :*

AL-HADITH

1. Said the Prophet : Very wicked are those who purchase human beings. (Bukhari)

2. Very wicked are those who trade in human bodies. (Tirmizi)

3. Said the Prophet : There are three types of people with whom I shall remonstrate on the day of judgement : One is that type of people who enter into an agreement and break it. The second are those who make free men slaves and sell them and the third type of people are those who hire a labourer, take work out of him, but deny him his wages. (Bukhari)

RIGHT TO LIFE, PROPERTY AND SELF-RESPECT :

AL-QUR'AN

For this cause have we ordained to the children of Israel that he who slayeth any one, unless it be a person guilty of man-slaughter, or of spreading disorder in the land, shall be as though he had slain all mankind ; but that he who saveth a life, shall be as though he had saved all mankind. (Q. 5:32)

Covet not that in which God hath made some of

*Slavery was denounced by the Prophet in clear terms. Since the employment of slave labour was universal among the Arabs during his time, as among certain other neighbouring nations, the Qur'an devised various means to effect the freedom of the slave. Vide Q. 4 : 92, Q. 5 : 89, Q. 58 : 3, Q. 2 : 177, Q. 9 : 60.

Reference to the subject will be found in the next chapter also.

you to excel others. Men shall have their share according to what they have earned and women shall have their share according to what they have earned. And ask God, therefore, of His bounty. Verily, God hath knowledge of all things. (Q. 4:36)

AL-HADITH

1. Said the Prophet : Your lives, your property and your honour are as sacred as this day (the day of Haj) is sacred. (Bukhari)

2. Your blood and your property are inviolable till the last Day. (Bukhari and Muslim)

Note : The subject of property is dealt with more fully in the next chapter.

RIGHTS OF OTHERS IN ONE'S PROPERTY.*

AL-QUR'AN

To every one have we appointed heirs of what parents and kindred leave; and to those with whom ye have joined right hands in contract, give the share due to them. Verily God is witness over all things.

(Q. 4:37)

But seek, by means of what God hath given thee, to attain the future Mansion, and neglect not thy part in this world, but be bounteous to others as God hath been bounteous to thee. (Q. 28:77)

O ye who believe ! bestow alms of the good things which ye have acquired, and of that which we have brought forth for you out of the earth, and choose not the bad stuff for almsgiving. (Q. 2:269)

AL-HADITH

1. Said the Prophet : God has fixed a certain

*NOTE: Some material relevant to this section is already given under 'Zakat and Sadaqa', pages 108-115.
Further material will be covered by the next chapter.

portion in the wealth of every rich man such as shall suffice the needs of the poor. If, nevertheless, people are found hungry and naked and indigent, the situation is due to the negligence and miserliness of the rich and God will take account of the defaulting rich on the day of judgement. Perfection of living in Islam lies in the payment of what is due to the poor.

(Kunuzul Haqaiq)

RIGHT TO BASIC MATERIAL COMFORT :

AL-QUR'AN

And we said : O Adam !

For to thee is it granted that thou shalt not hunger therein (Earth), neither shalt thou be naked;

And that thou shalt not thirst therein, neither shalt thou parch with heat. (Q. 20:115-117)

AL-HADITH

1. Said the Prophet : The basic right of the son of Man is for three things—a house to live in, a piece of cloth to cover his body, a loaf of bread and water.

(Tirmizi)

FREEDOM OF RESIDENCE AND MIGRATION :

AL-QUR'AN

O ye people ! Serve your Lord who made the earth a resting place for you. (Q. 2:22-23)

Surely God's is the sovereignty of the heavens and the earth. (Q. 9:116)

The East and the West are God's. (Q. 2:142)

"Was not God's earth spacious enough for you to migrate ? (Q. 4:94)

It is God who hath given you the earth as a sure foundation. (Q. 40:64)

O my servants who have believed ! Truly spacious is my earth. (Q. 29:56)

And whoso emigrates in the way of God will find in the earth many places of refuge and plentiful resources. (Q. 4:100)

RIGHT OF ASYLUM:

Even if any one of those who join gods with God (or are opposed to you) seek an asylum of thee, grant him an asylum. (Q. 9:6)

AL-HADITH

1. Said the Prophet addressing those who did not accept the Faith : Live wherever you like, but the understanding between us is this : You should neither shed blood, nor waylay anyone, nor oppress any one.
(Ninal Awtas)

FREEDOM FROM AFFRONT AND SUSPICION:

AL-QUR'AN

And they who shall affront believing men and believing women, for no fault of theirs, they shall surely bear the guilty of slander, and of a clear wrong.
(Q. 33:58)

O Believers ! avoid frequent suspicions, for some suspicions are a crime; and pry not : neither let the one of you traduce another in his absence. Would any one of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother ? Surely ye would loathe it. And fear ye God : for God is ready to turn, Merciful. (Q. 49:11-12)

RIGHT OF PRIVACY;

AL-QUR'AN

O ye who believe ! enter not into other houses than your own, until ye have asked leave, and have saluted its inmates. This will be best for you : haply ye will bear this in mind.

And if ye find no one therein, then enter it not till leave be given you; and if it be said to you "Go ye back," then go ye back. This will be more blameless in you, and God knoweth what ye do. (Q: 24:27-28)

AL-HADITH

1. Said the Prophet: Obtain formal permission of its occupant before you enter any house. You cannot enter even the chamber of your mother without permission. It is possible she might not be properly dressed to receive you, if you get in without announcement. (Malik)

2. Whoso looks into the letter of his brother without his permission, he only looks into the Fire.
(Abu Dawud)

RIGHT TO KNOWLEDGE :

Note: Relevant material is given under chapter entitled "Equipment" pages 91-101.

RIGHT OF OPINION :

AL-QUR'AN

Let there be no compulsion in Religion. Now is the right way made distinct from error. Whoever therefore shall deny Taghut (force for disunity) and believe in God, he will have taken hold of a strong handle that shall not be broken: and God is He who Heareth, Knoweth. (Q. 2: 257)

AL-HADITH

1. Said the Prophet: There should be no bias in religion. Save yourselves from exaggeration, for, former communities have perished on that account.

(Ibn Maja and Nisai)

(For further material, see under "Class Prejudice" pages 139-140).

RIGHT OF RETALIATION :

AL-QUR'AN

And fight in the way of God against those who fight against you, but do not take the offensive. Surely God loves not the aggressors. (Q. 190)

And fight them until there is no persecution, and religion is only for God. But if they desist, then there should be no hostility except against those who continue to oppress. (Q. 2:193)

Yet let the recompense of evil be only a like thereof; but he who forgiveth and is reconciled, shall be rewarded by God himself; for, He loveth not those who act unjustly.

And there will be no way open against those who, after being wronged, retaliate.

And if you at all retaliate, then retaliate to the extent ye were injured; but if ye can endure patiently, best will it be for those who endure patiently.

Endure then with patience. But thy patient endurance must be sought in none but God.

(Q. 16:126-127)

But there shall be a way open against those who unjustly wrong others, and act insolently on the earth in disregard of justice. These! a grievous punishment doth await them. (Q. 42:40)

And whoso beareth wrongs with patience and forgiveth, this verily is high-mindedness. (Q. 42:40)

ONE'S RESPONSIBILITY NOT IMPOSED ON OTHERS :

AL-QUR'AN

No soul shall labour but for itself; and no burdened one shall bear another's burden. (Q. 6:64)

AL-HADITH

1. Said the Prophet: Yes! the criminal himself is responsible for his crime. The son is not to be held responsible for the crime of his father, nor the father for the crime of his son. (Ibn Maja and Tirmizi)

JUSTICE:

AL-QUR'AN

O ye who believe! Be maintainers of justice, witnesses for God, even though it be against yourselves, or your parents, or your kindred, whether the party be rich or poor. God is nearer than you to both. Therefore follow not low desires, lest ye swerve from truth. And if ye twist or turn away from truth, God verily is well aware of what ye do. (Q. 4:135)

O believers! stand up as witnesses for God by righteousness: and let not ill-will at any, induce you not to act uprightly. Act uprightly. Next will this be to the fear of God. (Q. 5:8)

AL-HADITH

1. Said the Prophet: The best of Jihad is to speak a Just word before a tyrannical authority.
(Tirmizi and Abu Dawud)

2. Said the Prophet: Verily the just shall be near God on pulpits of light, on the right hand of the Merciful (God), they who are just in the exercise of their authority, just to their people, and to those over whom they are made guardians. (Muslim and Nisai)

Section III—Rights of Women

EQUALITY IN STATUS BETWEEN MAN AND WOMAN:

AL-QUR'AN

O men! fear your Lord, who hath created you of a single being, and of him created his wife, and from these twain hath spread abroad so many men and women. And fear ye God, in whose name ye ask

mutual favours,—and reverence the wombs that bare you. Verily is God watching over you! (Q. 4:1)

“I will not suffer the work of any among you that worketh, whether male or female, to be lost. The one of you is the issue of the other. (Q. 3:194)

MUTUAL RIGHTS BETWEEN MAN AND WOMAN :

AL-HADITH

1. Said the Prophet: Fear God in respect of your obligations to the womenfolk.

(Muslim and Abu Dawud)

2. Said the Prophet: You have rights over women and the women have rights over you. (Tabari)

MARRIED LIFE :

AL-QUR'AN

And you are permitted to marry virtuous women who are believers; and virtuous women of those who have received the Scriptures before you, when you have provided them their dowry, to live chastely with them in wedlock, neither fornicating nor making amours in secret. (Q. 5:7)

And marry those among you who are single, and your good servants and slave girls. If they are good, God of his bounty will enrich them. God is all-bounteous. Knowing.

And let those who cannot find a match, live in continence till God of his bounty shall enrich them. And to those of your slaves who desire a deed of manumission, execute it for them, if ye know good in them, and give them a portion of the wealth of God which He hath given you. Force not your female slaves into sin, in order that ye may gain the casual fruitions of this world, if they wish to preserve their modesty. Yet if any one compel them, then Verily to them, after their

compulsion, will God be Forgiving Merciful.

(Q. 24:32-33)

And if ye are apprehensive that ye shall not deal fairly with orphans, then, of other women who seem good in your eyes, marry but two, or three, or four; but if ye fear that ye shall not act equitably, then one only; or (marry) the slaves whom ye have acquired: this will make justice on your part easier. Give women their dowry freely; but if of themselves, they give up aught thereof to you, then enjoy it as convenient, and profitable. (Q. 4:3)

AL-HADITH

1. Said the Prophet: To live in marriage is to observe my way. He who turns away from this way is not of me. (Kanzul Umal)

2. Said the Prophet: O young men! He among you who can afford to meet the expenses of marriage, let him marry. The act prompts him to lower his gaze before women, and to protect his private parts. He among you who cannot afford to meet the expenses of marriage, let him observe fast. It is a line of defence for him (against evil tendencies).

(Bukhari and Muslim)

3. Said the Prophet: One wants to marry for four things: (1) wealth (2) family status (3) beauty and (4) righteous living. May God direct you to the righteous woman! (Bukhari and Muslim)

4. Said the Prophet: Should any of you choose to send an offer of marriage to a woman, let him before hand, if possible, have a look at the woman concerned to assure himself whether she is attractive enough for him. (Muslim)

5. Said the Prophet: No one should send an offer of marriage to anyone if he knows that already

another's offer has been made, till the first offer has been withdrawn or rejected. (Bukhari and Muslim)

6. Abu Huraira narrates : the Prophet once said that marriage with a woman is not complete without her specific consent. The companions of the Prophet asked him : What is the manner of assent? He replied : Even to remain silent, when the offer is announced to her, is a sign of assent.

(Bulugh al Maram)

7. Narrates Ibn Abbas : A virgin girl came to the Prophet and represented to him that his father had married her to someone and that she did not like the marriage. The Prophet allowed her to declare the marriage null and void. (Bulugh al Maram)

8. Narrates Ayisha : Hind bint 'Atba wife of Abu Sufiyan, came to the Prophet and represented : O Prophet of God ! Abu Sufiyan is a miser. He does not give me enough to provide for myself and my children. Is it wrong, if I should appropriate anything from his wealth without his knowledge? Replied the Prophet : "In good faith, you can take from his wealth to the extent of your needs and those of your children." (Bulugh al Maram)

MEHAR (DOWRY) AND GOOD TREATMENT :

AL-QUR'AN

(Note : The Quranic provisions in respect of Mehar are, contained in the verses : Q. 4:4, Q. 4:19-20, Q. 2:229, Q. 2:236-237.)

AL-HADITH

1. Said the Prophet : that mehar (dowry to be paid by the bridegroom to the bride) is good which it is easy to pay. (Abu Dawud)

2. Said the Prophet : He is a good man (before

God and man) who is good to his wife and family.

(Tirmizi)

3. Said the Prophet: He is the most perfect believer (in God) who is perfect in his manners and who is very tender towards his wife and children.

(Tirmizi)

MUT'A IS PROHIBITED:

(Note: Mut'a is temporary marriage)

AL-HADITH

1. Salma bin Ak'u states that the Prophet permitted Mut'a during the campaign of Awtas just for three days and then prohibited it. (Muslim)

2. Ali, the son in law of the Prophet, states that the Prophet prohibited Mut'a during the campaign of Khyber. (Bukhari and Muslim)

3. Rabi bin Sabra states on the authority of his father that the Prophet said: "I had once permitted you to enter into Mut'a with women." But later on, the revelation came to me from God that Mut'a was prohibited for ever. So, whoever possesses a woman living with you in Mut'a, let him separate himself from that woman. But whatever has been given to her, let it not be claimed back.

(Muslim: Abu Dawud: Nisai, Ibn Maja and Ahmed)

DIVORCE:

The right of divorce is given in Islam both to the husband and the wife. The divorce effected by the former is called *Talaq*, whereas that effected by the latter is called *Khul'a*. But the attitude of the Prophet in respect of this provision is expressed in his memorable words:

“Of all the things permissible, the most displeasing to Allah is divorce. (Abu Dawud and Ibn Maja)

Note: It is not proposed to note down the source material under this subject, since it forms a very big chapter of the civil law of Islam and will be of interest only to the student of law. The leading or basic provisions of the Law (Fiqh) in this connection are embodied in the following verses of the Quran :

Q. 2:226-242, Q. 65:1-7, Q. 4:35, Q. 4:128
Q. 33:49.

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Section IV—Governance

SUPREMACY OF LAW:

AL-QUR'AN

O David! verily we have made thee our vicegerent upon earth. Judge therefore between men with Truth and follow not thy passions, lest they cause thee to err from the way of God. For they who err from the way of God shall meet with a grievous chastisement, for that they have forgotten the day of reckoning. (Q. 38:25)

But if the truth had followed in the train of their desires, the heavens and the earth, and all that therein is, had surely come to ruin. (Q. 23:73)

And to thee have we sent down the Book (Qur'an) with truth, confirmatory of previous scriptures, and their safeguard. Judge between them by what God hath sent down, and follow not their desires by deserting the truth which hath come unto thee. (Q. 5:53)

We have sent our apostles with clear tokens, and we have caused the Book and the balance to descend with them, that men might observe Justice. (Q. 57:25)

GOVERNANCE TO BE ENTRUSTED TO SALEHIN OR THE RIGHTEOUS:

And now, since the law was given, have we written

in the Psalms that "my servants, the righteous shall inherit the earth."

God hath promised to those of you who believe and do the things that are right, that He will cause them to succeed others in the land, as He gave succession to those who were before them. (Q. 24:54)

RASHIDINIAN TRADITION

1. Said Abu Bakr, the first Khalif of Islam: I have not given you the trouble light-heartedly. I have assembled you all here that you might share with me the responsibility of bearing the trust which you have laid on my shoulders. Without doubt, I am but an individual like every one of you, and I expect you to speak out the truth freely when you disagree with me, and to say that you agree with me when you really agree with me. I do not wish that you should simply endorse my opinion or respect my personal wishes. I say this because the Book delivered to you of God is with you which stands for Truth. I say with full trust in God that I have no wish other than to say what exactly is the truth. (Kitab-al-Kharaj)

Narrates U'ruwa: Abu Bakr once delivered an address which he began with the praise of God and of the Prophet and said: You have made me your leader although I am in no way superior to you. The Qur'an has been delivered to us. The Prophet has left behind for us his example. We have believed in them and acted accordingly. The strongest among you will be the weakest until I see to it that they have discharged the duty that is expected of them; and without doubt the weakest among you in my eyes is the strongest until what is due to others is not restored to them. O People! I am a follower of Islam and by no means an originator of any innovation. So, whenever I go right, co-operate with me; whenever I err, correct me. And these are my words and I invoke divine blessings on you and me.

(Kitabul Amwal' Li 'Abi Ubaid)

GOVERNANCE BY CONSULTATION:

AL-QUR'AN

More enduring is a portion with God whose affairs are guided by mutual counsel. (Q. 42:36)

AL-HADITH

1. The community which regulates its affairs by counsel will prosper. (Kunuz-ul-Haqaiq)

THE AMIR :

(Leader or head of administration)

AL-QUR'AN

Truly, the most worthy of honour in the sight of God is he who is most mindful of God. (Q. 49:13)

And it is He who hath made you the vicegerents on the earth, and hath raised some of you above others by various grades, that he may try you in what he hath given you. (Q. 6:165)

O ye who believe! obey God and obey the apostle, and those among you invested with authority; and if in aught ye differ, bring it before God and the apostle, if ye believe in God and in the latter day. This is the best and fairest way of settlement. (Q. 4:62)

And obey not the bidding of those who commit excesses, who act disorderly on the earth and reform it not. (Q. 26:152)

Neither obey him whose heart we have made careless of the remembrance of Us, and who followeth his own lusts, and whose ways are unbridled. (Q. 18:27)

AL-HADITH

1. Said the Prophet: Even if three persons find themselves in a wilderness, it is not proper for them to live together without selecting one of them as their

leader. (Ahmed: Musnad, and Mishkat)

2. Umar, the Second Khalif of Islam, said : There is no Islam without an orderly community, and there is no community without a leader; and there is no leadership without obedience to it. The leader among men is like the soul in a body. (Kunuzul Haqaiq)

PLACE OF AUTHORITY NOT TO BE GIVEN TO ONE WHO SEEKS IT:

3. Abu Musa narrates that he once came to the Prophet along with two of his cousins. One of them requested the Prophet to send him out as governor of some province. The other cousin also made a similar request. 'By God', said the Prophet: "We do not appoint any one to the post of a governor any one who applies for it, or aspires to it.

(Bukhari, Muslim and others)

4. Maqdam bin M'adi Karab states : "The Prophet of God once held me by both of my shoulders and said : O Maqdam! you will be in a state of happiness after you die, if only you avoided to hold a governorship, or any other responsible office of administration. (Taisir-ul-Usul)

5. Abu Zar narrates : "I once asked the Prophet why he would not choose him as governor. The Prophet laid his hand on my shoulder, and said : "O Abu Zar! you are a weak man and a governorship is a trust. On the day of judgement, you will not receive anything except the sense of shame, and I cannot appoint any one to such an office except him who can discharge the duties of the office with a firm hand.

(Muslim and Abu Dawud)

According to another tradition, it is stated that the Prophet said to Abu Zar: "O Abu Zar? I find you weak. I wish for you that which I wish for myself. Do

not wish to be a ruler over even two men and do not wish to be a trustee for the property of an orphan.”

(Taisir ul Usual)

6. Abdur Rahman bin Samra narrates: The Prophet of God once said to him: O Abdur Rahman! Never aspire to become a governor; for, if you are appointed a governor without applying for that office, God will aid you in your work. On the other hand, if you are given the governorship in response to an application from you, you will have to bear the entire burden without divine assistance. (Bukhari and Muslim)

7. Abu Huraira narrates: The Prophet once observed: The time is not far off when you people will develop inordinate ambitions. But on the day of judgement, you will have to feel humble in your own eyes.

(Bukhari and Muslim and others)

OFFICE OF THE HEAD OF ADMINISTRATION:

8. Said the Prophet: Obedience to the Amir (leader or head of administration) should be not in sin (to any command issued in violation of the Law), but in what is approved (by law). (Bukhari and others)

9. Said the Prophet: It is obligatory on a Muslim to listen and obey (the command of the Amir), willingly or unwillingly, so long as the command is not to do an unlawful thing. If the command, however, is to do an unlawful thing, then there should be neither listening nor obeying. (Muslim)

10. States Abu Sajid: Said the Prophet: On the day of judgement, he will be the best loved of God and the nearest to Him in station who had been a just administrator, and the most despised and the farthest in station will be he who had been an unjust administrator. (Tirmizi)

11. States Anas: Said the Prophet of God: Listen to and obey even a negro slave with a head resembling a dried grape who is placed in authority over you, so long as he issues orders according to the Book of God.

(Bukhari)

12. Umar, the Khalif of Islam, states: The Prophet once addressed us: Shall I tell you which of your administrators are good people and which are not good? The good administrators are those whom you love and who love you, and for whose well being you pray, and who pray for your well being. The administrators who are not good are those with whom you are not pleased and who are not pleased with you, and whom you curse and who curse you. (Tirmizi)

13. Said the Prophet: The administrator who lays a false charge against those entrusted to his care, is clearly aiming at their ruination. (Taisir ul Usul)

14. Said the Prophet: The person who when placed in administrative authority over a people does not promote their well-being in sincerity, will never catch even the scent of heaven. (Bukhari)

15. Said the Prophet: Apply the sanctions of law on your own self and on others equally impartially, and do not mind any evil opinion entertained of you on that account. (Ibn Maja)

16. States Abu Bakr: I have heard the Prophet saying that an administrator should not decide between the claims of two persons when he is in anger.

(Bukhari)

17. The Prophet said: The curse of God rests on the administrator who has accepted a bribe and on him who has offered it. (Tirmizi)

IJTEHAD :

AL-QUR'AN

And whoso maketh efforts for us, in our ways will we guide them, for God is assuredly with those who act righteously. (Q. 29:69)

A blessed Book have we sent down to thee, that men may meditate on its verses, and that those endowed with understanding may bear it in mind. (Q. 38:29)

AL-HADITH

1. Narrates Hafs : When the Prophet desired to appoint Ma'az as Judge of Yemen he asked him : "Whenever a case comes up before you for decision, what procedure will you adopt to reach it?" Ma'az replied : "I shall decide according to the Book of God." The Prophet then asked : "Suppose on any particular issue, the Book is silent?" Replied Ma'az : "I shall decide according to the example of the Prophet." The Prophet again asked : "Suppose you find no guidance either from the Book or from my practice?" Ma'az replied : "I shall then exercise my own personal judgement; but I shall see to it that my judgement does not conflict with the Law." On hearing this, the Prophet gently tapped on the breast of Ma'az by way of approbation. Ma'az then expressed his thanks to God for having inspired the Prophet to express his satisfaction.

(Abu Dawud)

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Chapter 12

ISLAMIC ECONOMY

THE plan of economy recommended for man by the Qur'an is based on the postulate that all creatures of God constitute, in the words of the Prophet, a single family, the "Family of God", and as such, the function of maintaining that economy is to be a joint affair between God as the Head of the family, on the one hand, and of the members thereof, on the other. It is why the Qur'an makes it definitely clear that it is the function of God to provide, under His scheme of life, the means of subsistence for every member of the Family, and that it is the function of every member to reach the means so provided and make use of them in the spirit of thankfulness to the Head of the Family and in a manner equitable to every constituent member.

Referring to the divine part of this responsibility, observes the Qur'an :

There is no moving thing on earth whose nourishment dependeth not on God; He knoweth its haunts and final resting place; all is in the open Book. (Q. 11:8)
Verily God is the Sole Sustainer! (Q. 51:58)
It is We who distribute their subsistence among them in this world's life. (Q. 43:31)

The Qur'an adds that this function is discharged under a definite plan. Everything is furnished close at hand with all that its particular nature demands for its existence in every changing situation. Take the case of man. The moment he takes his birth, the food that he needs provides itself for him in the exact form that his condition demands, and is provided very close to him. The mother, in the intensity of her affection for the new born babe, hugs him to her bosom and at

that very place the child finds the store-house of his nourishment. And then his graded needs are attended to by Nature in a manner agreeable to the successive changes in his condition. In the beginning, the stomach of a child is so tender that a highly diluted form of milk is needed for him. That is why the milk of the mother, even as among other animals, is very thin to begin with. But as the child grows and his stomach becomes stronger as time passes, the milk of the mother thickens ; so much so, that as soon as the stage of his early infancy is over and his stomach develops the capacity to digest the normal food agreeable to this stage, the breasts of the mother dry up. This is the sign of divine providence to indicate that the child should no longer depend upon milk but should be able to try other forms of food :

"With pain his mother beareth him ; with pain she bringeth him forth ; and his bearing and his weaning is thirty months." (Q. 49:15)

The Qur'an points out that the things most needed in life are the things most profusely provided, and similarly those needed in particular climes or only in particular situations are given local habitation and are limited in quantity.

"And no one thing is there, but with us are its store-houses ; and We send it not but in settled measure :

(Q. 15:21)

With Him everything is by measure. (Q. 13:8)

The provisions of life thus provided, Nature is careful enough to endow every object of creation with a talent appropriate to each, such as shall enable it to reach and make use of its means of subsistence. This talent is styled *Hidayat*. The Qur'an refers to several forms of it. Here attention may be drawn only to that primary form of it which opens out for every object of creation appropriate avenues of nourishment and which stimulates its wants and directs it to the means of their satisfaction. Were it not for this *Hidayat* inherent in

everything, no object of creation will profit by the means of sustenance provided around it, and life itself will cease to function.

This directing force in its primary aspect, says the Qur'an, is nothing but the instinctive urge of nature, or the talent inherent in sense-perception. It is this inward force which actuates a thing to be drawn to its means of sustenance. The offspring of a human being or of an animal, the moment it is delivered from the womb of its mother, instinctively feels that its means of sustenance is in the breasts of its mother and forthwith draws itself to it. The moment it touches the nipple of its mother's breast, it automatically starts the process of sucking. We often see how the kitten, the moment they are delivered, and even before they open their eyes and the mother is still licking at them, rush themselves to the breasts of their mother. The infant which has just come out into life and which has not as yet been affected by its external world, instinctively realizes that the breasts of its mother are the store-house of its nourishment, and promptly reaches its mouth to them. It is its instinct which guides the infant to its nourishment, before it is guided to it by its senses.

The next stage in this scheme of direction is that of the senses, and of the reasoning faculty. The lower animals, though they do not probably possess the intellect which helps reasoning and reflection, have in them the talent of sense perception to the extent they need in their particular spheres of life and by means of which they regulate and satisfy their wants of life, their needs of habitation, food, reproduction and safety. But this talent in them is not uniform. On the other hand, it is given to each in proportion to the demands of its needs. The sense of smell is very acute in the ant, for, it is through this sense that it has to fetch its food. The sight of the eagle or of the vulture is very keen, for, otherwise it cannot locate its food from on high.

The provision of 'Hidayat' in man takes a higher form. In addition to instinct and sense perception, man is endowed with the faculty of reason and reflection. This talent he has to use not merely in seeking out the provisions of life provided by Nature, but to make a right use of them. For, according to the Qur'an, the provision of life to man and of the means of his sustenance is not an end in itself. It is of consequence neither to God nor to man, unless it subserves a divine objective justifying his creation. In fact the Qur'an draws attention to such an objective.

Praise the name of Thy Lord, the Most High !
Who hath created, and balanced all things,
Who hath fixed their roles, and guideth them.

(Q. 87:1-3)

God hath created the Heavens and the Earth for a serious end.

Our Lord ! All this, Thou hath not created in vain,

(Q. 3:188)

In a previous chapter, we have had occasion to discuss the role assigned to man in the scheme of things the role of vicegerency of God on earth. Among the things he has to interest himself in this role that which is of primary importance is the acquisition of his means of subsistence and the manner in which he has to make use of it. And in this he has to make a conscious effort.

Indeed, God himself offers to co-operate with man in this endeavour.

"Ye believers ! help me, and I will help you and set your feet firm. (Q. 47:8)

In fact as an earnest of Divine co-operation, states the Qur'an, God has subjected to man all that there is in the heavens and the earth.

And He hath subjected to you all that there is in the heavens and all that there is in the earth : All is from Him. Verily, herein are signs for those who reflect. (Q. 45:12)

It is God who hath created the heavens and the earth, and sendeth down water from the heavens, and so bringeth forth the fruits for your food : And He hath subjected to you the ships, so that by His command, they pass through the sea; and He hath subjected the rivers to you : and He hath subjected to you the sun and the moon in their constant courses : and He hath subjected the day and the night to you : of everything which ye ask Him, giveth He to you; and if ye would reckon up the favours of God, ye cannot count them ! Surely man is unjust, ungrateful ! (Q. 14:37)

The acquisition of the means of subsistence in which God promises to co-operate with man covers, in the Quranic sense, every human effort to provide oneself with what are called the good things of life and includes every activity aiming at material comfort, or what is termed in the language of economics "production of wealth". But the effort is to be directed towards a dual objective in order that man might fulfil his role as the vicegerent of God on earth. Firstly, he has to conform to the laws of Nature in order to profit by them, the Sunnat Allah, or the ways of God. Secondly he has to keep in view the needs of every constituent unit of human society. In other words, it will be the function of man to follow the way of honesty in acquiring wealth and to make use of it in a manner calculated to help to discharge faithfully what we have already explained in chapter 10,—'Haq Allah' or obligation to God or self, and 'Haq-al Nas' or obligation to society at large. This in brief is the frame-work of the Islamic economy as visualised by the Qur'an.

The social ethic of Islam, it will thus be seen, is rooted in the Prophet's concept of mankind constituting but one community, "a fold every member of which shall be a shepherd or keeper unto every other." ¹ Under such concept, exploitation in every form becomes impermissible. This is one of the basic postulates on which rests the economic order of life for mankind proposed by the Qur'an.

1. Bukhari ; 'Kitab-al-Ahkam'

Another basic postulate is this: "All that there is in the earth and the heavens belongs to God."² No plan of production and distribution is valid in Islam unless it accords with this assumption. Man is given the freedom to extract out of the earth all the good things of life that he needs. But the stipulation is that all produce is to be pooled and made available to one and all. It should be enjoyed not merely by those who have exerted themselves to extract the good things of life from the earth but by those as well who, for one reason or another, are incapable of exertion. The condition is implicit in the Islamic concept of mankind as a single family.

The problem of the poor, of those who cannot earn their living through infirmity or old age or for any similar reason, has been an eternal problem of human society. The utmost that could be thought of prior to the advent of Islam was to leave them to subsist on what is called "charity". But Islam would not leave such helpless people to the vagaries of charity. It gives them the right to a share in the wealth of the community. Whatever is produced or extracted from the earth is not the result entirely of human labour, asserts the Qur'an repeatedly. God also has a hand in the production. The very forces of nature which man presses to his service are clear signs of divine co-operation. God is thus a co-worker with man; in fact, the prime worker. As co-worker, therefore, a share of every produce must lie at God's disposal. And this the Qur'an assigns to those who cannot make an independent living of their own—the orphans and the unprotected widows, the infirm and the decrepit, the travellers in distress, and people who have been deprived of the means of sustenance or opportunities of work through natural calamities over which they have had no control, the slaves seeking freedom and the debtors who cannot afford to pay off their debts.³ They are all regarded by the Qur'an as a "trust" of God, in as much as the

2. Q. 2:284 3. Q. 9:60.

maintenance of every being brought into existence by God is declared to be a divine responsibility.⁴ The Qur'an therefore makes it obligatory on those who earn or produce to pass on to the state a specific portion of their savings as God's share to be distributed among the above category of the members of society.⁵ The Quranic way of expression is: "Give a part of your wealth in the way of God" (*fi sabil-lillah*),⁶ and "for the sake or for the love of God" (*'ala hub-bihi*).⁷ So great is the stress laid on this levy called Zakat, that the compulsory injunction of prayer is always clubbed together with the insistence on the payment of this levy; so much so, that when in the time of the first Khalif, Abu Bakr, some of the Muslim Arab tribes refused to pay Zakat to the State exchequer, he had to wage a *jihad* against them till they yielded.⁸

The care of the weak and the economically depressed members of society is thus a state responsibility in Islam. The Quranic plan is to afford to every member of the State at least a minimum of human comfort, for, in the words of the Prophet, the birth right of "every human being is a house to live in, a piece of cloth to hide his nakedness, a loaf of bread and a jug of water",⁹ words meant but to emphasise that the economy of a state should be so planned as to allow to every citizen the opportunity of living a life free from want.

While thus guaranteeing adequate help to those who could not make a living of their own, the Quranic plan allows full freedom of initiative and enterprise to the rest to increase their wealth, and raise their standard of comfort by all legitimate means. Hoarding, therefore, is condemned, and free circulation enjoined.¹⁰

4. Q. 12:1.

5. Q. 2:267; 59:7; Q. 6:141.

6. Q. 2:191.

7. Q. 2:172; 76:8.

8. Tabari's History: The Annals of 11th Hijra; Bukhari: 'Kitab-al-Zakat'.

9. Tirmizi.

10. Q. 2:275.

The only condition imposed is that no one should take advantage of another's weakness in monetary dealings with him. The Qur'an therefore prohibits all forms of exploitation and speculation in commercial transactions, but permits every form of free enterprise, large or small, individual or collective, which has no unsocial strings attached to it. Further, as a deterrent to all urges of exploitation or aggrandisement, the Quranic plan, while assuring every citizen the fullest opportunity of acquiring wealth, makes it impossible for wealth to accumulate in but few hands, and this it does by enforcing a law of inheritance which makes it impossible for a property left behind by a deceased to go to any single or specific member of the deceased's family. It is distributed among all near relations—wife or husband, sons and daughters, mother and father, and failing these, collateral near relation.¹¹ Indeed, if the property is large enough to keep every relation in law to live in comfort with the share according to him or to her, a portion of the property is recommended to be willed away, particularly "in the way of Allah" (*fī sabil-lillah*) as defined already.¹²

In defining the relation that should subsist between the employer and the employed, care was taken to uphold the dignity of labour, and protect its interests. In the time of the Prophet, labour was of two kinds—the slave, and the free. The former composed of captives and of those who had sold or mortgaged their freedom in moments of economic distress, and had to live a life of great discomfort. The Prophet turned his first attention to them. This system of slavery was prevalent throughout the then known world, and was such an integral part of the economic life of the Arabs, that it could not be set aside at one stroke. What the Prophet therefore attempted was to humanize the system and prepare the ground for its total abolition.

11. Q. 59:7. 12. Q. 4:11-12 and 176.

To begin with, he made the bondsman a member of the family of his master, and gave him several privileges including the right to own property, and redeem himself if he so chose to. "Those who happen to be your bondsmen," ran the Prophet's directive, "are your own brothers. God has placed them under your authority. It is meet that he who is in authority over his brother should feed him with the food that he himself eats, and clothe him with the stuff that he himself wears. Do not ask him to do a thing which is not physically possible for him to do; and if such a thing is to be done, do you yourself assist him in his task."¹³ Not merely this, every means was devised to procure his freedom. For every little moral lapse on the part of the rich or of those who maintained slaves, or for every small dereliction of religious duty, the atonement prescribed was the redemption of a slave. And where the chances of lapses were few, the urge for spiritual development was invoked to help the process of redemption. "What is spiritual ascent" asks the Qur'an and itself gives the answer. "It is to redeem a slave."¹⁴ "Nothing pleases God," adds the Prophet, "better than to free a slave."¹⁵

The cumulative effect of the Prophetic care for the slave was so great that slavery had to lose its sting, and restore the slave to a place of honour in society. The story of Islam furnishes examples of individuals drawn from the slave class rising even to the headship of Muslim states. Indeed, one of the loved companions of the Prophet, Bilal, who had the privilege to call the Prophet and the faithful five times a day from the Mosque at Madina, to 'salat' and 'falah', to the path of 'prayer' and of 'progress', and who was to add to his early morning call the rider, "prayer is better than sleep", this first 'Muazzin' of Islam, was a redeemed Abyssinian slave.

The free labourer was a subject of equal concern

13. Bukhari. 14. Q. 90:12-13. 15. Bukhari.

to the Prophet. "Pay the labourer his wages before his perspiration dries", was his injunction.¹⁶ He regarded every worker as *Habib Allah* or a friend of God.¹⁷ The story is told of a labourer who happened to pay a visit to the Prophet. His hands were deeply darkened and scarred. Asked as to the cause of disfiguration, the man said that he worked for his living in a quarry and had to hew down rocks for his employer. The Prophet looked at him tenderly, and taking both his hands into his own, kissed them.¹⁸ The entire trend of the Prophetic directions touching the subject of labour is one of strict enjoining on the employer to be fair and considerate in his dealings with the employed and never to be tempted to exploit his position.

The basic purpose underlying all these arrangements is to let man use his earnings or his wealth with a steady eye on the twin obligations enjoined on him by the Qur'an viz., the Haq Allah and the Haq al Ibad, or obligations to self, and obligations to society. The standard of living recommended by the Qur'an is not to be expressed in extravagant material comfort or in self-indulgence. On the other hand, it is to be an expression of satisfaction of the normal material needs of life blending harmoniously with the spiritual, the latter arising out of one's desire to fulfil one's obligation to society or by foregoing extravagant comfort "in the way of Allah", or for the comfort of the comfortless. That is "righteous" living in Islam, the only human standard of living acceptable to God or the conscience of humanity at large.

In what manner this ideal is to be interpreted and implemented at the corporate or state level in the context of the present day world is for the leaders of men in the countries of the Middle East to seriously consider. If these countries are ever to maintain a balance between the exaggerated opposites developed by the West-

16. Prophet's farewell Hajj address. 17. Baihaqi.

18. Asad al Ghabah.

Industrial capitalism and Russian communism—they will have to make an earnest move to reinterpret the Quranic economy in terms of the present day needs of the modern world, and offer it to both the western ideologies to enter upon as a common ground or a half way house between the two. Such is the view held also by that eminent European scholar, Prof. Gibb, who has devoted his lifetime to the study of Islam. Says he:

“Within the Western world, Islam still maintains the balance between exaggerated opposites. Opposed equally to the anarchy of European nationalism and the regimentation of Russian Communism, it has not yet succumbed to that obsession with the economic side of life which is characteristic of present day Europe and present-day Russia alike. Its social ethic has been admirably summed up by Professor Massignon: “Islam has the merit of standing for a very equalitarian conception of the contribution of each citizen by tithe to the resources of the community; it is hostile to unrestricted exchange, to banking capital, to state loans, to indirect taxes on objects of prime necessity, but it holds to the rights of the father and the husband, to private property and to commercial capital. Here again it occupies an intermediate position between the doctrines of bourgeois-capitalism and Bolshevist Communism.”¹⁹

But is a return to the Quranic economy possible for the present day Muslim without equipping himself beforehand with a mind acceptable to the Qur'an, a mind which could lay an equal emphasis on the *Haq Allah* and *Haq al Ibad*, obligations to self and obligations to society, and work for an order of life “every member of which shall be a shepherd unto every other”? This shepherd mind is the imperative need of Muslims as of the rest of mankind. It thrives, as the history of Islam

¹⁹. ‘Whither Islam’ by Prof. H. A. R. Gibb, Victor Gollancz Ltd., London, 1932, p. 379.

has demonstrated, more agreeably in the atmosphere of democracy than in any other. But the democracy envisaged by the Qur'an is a democracy of Salehin, of men who give poise to life and protect it from every form of exploitation. Can the world of today resolve itself into a network of such democracies, each functioning as a shepherd unto every other? That is the call of the Qur'an, the order of life that it favours. The world at large, may not listen to it betimes and pay heed. But the Muslims cannot afford to neglect it: they will only do so at their peril. If the present generation of them everywhere could drop their inherited mediaevalism, and display the sense of God in their individual and group activity, by seriously betaking themselves to a democratic way of life such as shall bring to the helm only the 'Salehim', they may yet develop the necessary talent to withstand the shocks of time, and make a worthy contribution to the progress and peace of the world.

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SOURCE MATERIAL

Section I—Production

NATURE'S PROVISION.

AL-QUR'AN.

It is God who created you and then fed you.
(Q. 30:39)

There is no moving thing on earth whose nourishment dependeth not on God; he knoweth its haunts and final resting place: all is in the Clear Book.
(Q. 11:8)

Verily God is the Sole Sustainer. (Q. 51:58)

And surely have we honoured the children of Adam: by land and by sea have we carried them: food have we provided for them of good things, and have

made them excel in excellence many of those we have created. (Q. 17:72)

O ye who believe! eat of the good things with which we have supplied you, and give God thanks if Him it is that we worship. (Q. 2:167)

And that ye slay not your children, because of poverty: for them and for you will we provide: and that ye come not near to pollutions, outward and inward. (Q. 6:152)

EVERYTHING HARNESSSED TO BE OF SERVICE TO MAN.

See ye not how that God hath put under you all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth, and hath been bounteous to you of his favours, both for soul and body. (Q. 31:19)

Assuredly in the creation of the heavens and of the earth; and in the alternation of night and day; and in the ships which pass through the sea with what is useful to man; and in the rain which God sendeth down from heaven, giving life by it to the earth after its death, and by scattering over it all kinds of cattle; and in the change of the winds, and in the clouds that are made to do service between the heaven and the earth are signs for those who understand. (Q. 2:195)

And as to the earth, we have spread it out, and have thrown mountains upon it, and have caused an upgrowth in it of all beauteous kinds of plants, for insight and admonition to every servant who loveth to turn to God: And we send down the rain from heaven with its blessings, by which we cause gardens to spring forth and the grain of harvest: And tall palm trees with date bearing branches one above the other for man's nourishment: and life give we thereby to a dead land. (Q. 50:7-11)

It is God who hath created the heavens and the earth, and sendeth down water from the heaven, and

so bringeth forth the fruit for your food : And He hath subjected to you the ships, so that by His command, they pass through the sea; and He hath subjected the rivers to you: and He hath subjected to you the sun and the moon in their constant courses: and He hath subjected the day and the night to you: of everthing which ye ask Him, giveth He to you; and if ye would reckon up the favours of God, ye cannot count them! Surely man is unjust, ungrateful ! (Q. 15:37)

And no one thing is there, but with Us are its store-houses; and we send it not down but in settled measure. (Q. 15:21)

And we have sent down iron. Dire evil resideth in it, as well as advantage, to mankind! (Q. 15:26)

And the cattle! for you hath He created them: in them ye have warm garments and gainful uses; and of them ye eat: And they beseem you well when ye fetch forth to pasture: And they carry your burdens to lands which ye could not else reach but with travail of soul: truly your Lord is full of goodness, and merciful: And He hath given you horses, mules, and asses, that ye may ride them, and for your ornament: and things of which ye have knowledge hath he created. (Q. 16:5-8)

EXERT TO PROFIT BY NATURE'S PROVISIONS.

AL-QUR'AN

And ordained your sleep for rest,
And ordained the night as a mantle,
And ordained the day for gaining livelihood.
(Q. 79:9-11)

He knoweth that there will be some among you sick while others move about on the earth in quest of the bounties of God. (Q. 73:20)

Seek, then, your supplies from God; and serve Him and give Him thanks. (Q. 29:16)

And when the prayer is ended, then disperse yourselves abroad, and go in the quest of the bounties of God; and, that it may be well with you, oft remember God. (Q. 62:10)

And nothing shall be reckoned to man but that for which he hath made efforts. (Q. 53:40)

Covet not the gifts by which God hath raised some of you above others. The men shall have a portion according to their deserts, and the woman a portion according to their deserts. Of God, therefore ask his gifts. (Q. 4:36.)

AL-HADITH

Said the Prophet: The door of sustenance is open up to the very throne of God. (Kunuzul Haqaiq)

Go on exerting your self; for, it is a duty enjoined on you by God. (Ahmad: Musnad)

Said the Prophet: God likes everyone of his creatures to be engaged in some occupation. (Tabrani)

He who undergoes exertion gets the fruits thereof, and everyone who exerts does derive something or other from his exertion. (Farid Wajidi: Al Madinat Wal Islam)

God rewards everyone according to his talent and the earnestness with which he exercises that talent. (Farid Wajidi: Al Madinat Wal Islam)

Said the Prophet: It will be a good occupation for a woman if instead of keeping idle at home, she plies the spinning wheel. (Kunuzul Haqaiq)

Said the Prophet: Having finished your morning prayer, do not return to sleep unmindful of the need to earn your livelihood. (Kanzul Ummal)

Travel in the land that you might remain in good health and obtain your livelihood. (Kunuzul Haqaiq)

Travel in the company of those who are enterprising and well-to-do. (Kunuzul Haqaiq)

BEGGING CONDEMNED:

Said the Prophet: It is better for you to work for your livelihood than to appear on the day of judgement with the scar of begging impressed on your face. (Abu Dawud)

27. Said the Prophet: Poverty, it is possible, may constrain the afflicted to question his very belief in God." (Kunuzul Haqaiq)

Narrates Anas: "Once an Ansar came to the Prophet begging. "Have you anything at home?" asked the Prophet: "Why not", replied he. "I have a carpet with a part of which we cover ourselves in the night, and the remaining part we lie on. Besides this, we have a cup with which we take water." The Prophet asked him to bring the two things to him; and when these were brought to him, he asked those around him whether there was any one among them who would purchase the articles. One of those present said, that he would offer for them one dirham. The Prophet looked around, and said. "Is there any one who would pay more", and he repeated this twice or thrice. A person came forward to offer two dirhams and while handing the dirhams to the Ansar, said: "With one dirham, you purchase articles of food and send them to your wife and children. With the other dirham, you purchase an axe and bring it to me. When the axe was brought to the Prophet, he fixed a handle to the axe himself, and handing it back to the man, he said: "Go and cut wood from the jungle and sell it in the market, and come and see me after a fortnight." The person did as he was commanded. When he returned to the Prophet, he had with him ten dirhams to purchase clothes for the family members and food provisions. The Prophet observed: "This is better than going about begging. Begging produces a scar on one's countenance on the day of resurrection. Remember that

only three types of people may beg, the first is one who is in a state of abject penury, the second is he who has to save himself from an impending disgrace, and the third is one who is to pay blood money.

(Abu Dawud: Tirmizi)

Seek protection from God from penury and beggary
(Nasai: Baihaqi)

Said the Prophet: He who has made of begging a profession, his face, on the day of judgement will be bereft of flesh. (Bukhari)

KNOWLEDGE OF PROFESSION ADOPTED NECESSARY:

Truly God befriends him who has qualified himself for some useful work. (Kabir: Awsat)

Said the Prophet: Exert yourself. That work is easy of performance for which one has the requisite talent. (Bukhari and Muslim)

Said the Prophet: Try only that for which you have the requisite aptitude, for, everyone will get his deserts for which he is fitted. (Ibn Maja)

Musa Bin Talha relates on the authority of his father: The Apostle of God passed through some of the gardens in Madina. He saw some people up the date trees engaged in something. He enquired what they were doing. One of them replied that they were pollinating the female date flowers with the male ones so that the crop might be sumptuous. He said: I do not think this will lead to a richer harvest. The man went and related this to those working in the other gardens. In deference to the advice of the Prophet, they all desisted from the operation. That year, the yield was poor. The Prophet happened to pass the gardens once again and their owners reported to him of what had happened. He said: "I had given you my personal uninformed opinion. If what you were doing was really the right way of cultivation, you should certainly continue to do so. He said again: Mine only was a conjecture. You need not follow me

in personal conjectures. But, if I say something on behalf of Allah, accept it, for in the matter divine, I shall not err. In another narration of this incident, Anas bin Malik relates : (The Apostle of God) said : "You know your own affairs of the world better". In a further narration, Rafe'bin Khidaij relates : (The Apostle of God) said : I am but a human being : When I command you in any matter of faith, accept it, and when I speak anything to you on any mundane matter, it will be but an opinion, and I am but human just like you." (Muslim)

STEADINESS IN THE PURSUIT OF THE PROFESSION CHOSEN :

Said the Prophet : For him who has secured a steady means of livelihood, it will be well if he keeps to it. (Ibn Maja)

Narrates N'af'e: I used to send my agents for trade purposes usually to Syria and Egypt. I then shifted them to Iraq. Thereafter, I went to Aisha Siddiqah, the Mother of Believers, and said to her : "Formerly, I used to send my agents to Syria ; I now send them to Iraq. "She said : "Do you not do that. Why do you not keep to the usual practice. I have heard the Prophet say : "When God has shown to one some safe means of livelihood, it is not well for him to give it up until it ceases to be of any profit." (Ibn Maja)

Said the Prophet : It is part of foresight to go on improving upon one's means of livelihood.

(Kunuzul Haqaiq)

CLEAN EARNING:

The best of endeavours is to work for a clean means of livelihood.

(Farid Wajidi: Al-Madinat Wal Islam)

Divine blessings rest on the man who earns a clean living, and observes moderation in expense and puts by a little to meet unforeseen necessities of life.

(Ibn al Najjar)

There are numerous ways offering prayers to God and the best of them is to seek a clean living.

(Kunuzul Haqaiq)

Said the Prophet : He who obtains the good things of the world by lawful methods attains indeed to the position of a martyr. (Al Madinat Wal Islam)

The flesh gathered on one's body by means of an unclean earning deserves to be thrown into the Fire.

(Kunuzul Haqaiq)

God loves a man who works hard and gets tired in his pursuit for honest living. (Kunuzul Haqaiq)

Narrates Abu Huraira : The Prophet once said : "No Prophet was there who did not tend a flock. The companions of the Prophet asked him. "Did you also work as a shepherd?" "Yes" he said "I used to tend the sheep of the Meccans for a consideration."

(Bukhari)

The Prophet once said : The cleanest of food is that which has been earned by the labour of his hand. Indeed, the Prophet David used to work with his own hands for the food he took. (Bukhari)

ART AND CRAFT AND TRADE :

It is always good to earn one's livelihood through some art or craft. (Al Midhaj)

Seek your means of livelihood from the hidden treasures of the earth. (Tabrani)

Said the Prophet : Nine tenths of the means of subsistence of a people can be met by taking to trade and commerce. (Kanz ul-Umal)

THE LABOURER :

The best of livelihood is that of a labourer provided he discharges his obligations to his employers in the spirit of good-will towards him.

(Ahmed: Majm'a al-Zawaid)

Said the Prophet : Pay the wages of the labourer before his perspiration dries up. (Ibn Maja)

Abu Say'id Qhudri: Narrates that the Prophet forbade the forcing of a labourer to enter on his work before settling his wages. (Baihaqi)

God looks upon a labourer as his friend.
(Baihaqi)

Narrates Anas bin Malik : When Sayid al Ansari met the Prophet during the campaign of Tabuk, the Prophet shook hands with him and asked him why his hands were so full of scars. He replied that the scars were wrought on his hands by the heavy hammer and the rough rope which he had to employ in a quarry to earn the means of living for his family. The Prophet kissed both his hands and said : 'Fire can never touch these hands.' (Asad Al Ghabah)

A person came to the Prophet and asked of him as to how far he should forgive his servant. The Prophet kept silent. The man again asked him : How many times should he forgive his servant ? The Prophet said : Seventy times. (In the Arabic idiom, it means many times). (Tirmizi)

Said the Prophet : To reduce the promised wages of a labourer is a major sin. (Kunuzul Haqaiq)

Said the Prophet : I shall remonstrate with three types of people on the day of judgement and will make them feel ashamed of themselves. One of them is he who having taken work out of a labourer declines to pay him adequately. (Baihaqi)

Said the Prophet : Those who happen to be your bondsmen, are your own brothers. God has placed them under your authority. It is meet that he who is in authority over his brother should feed him with the food that he himself eats, and clothe him with the stuff that he himself wears. Do not ask him to do a thing which is not physically possible for him to do ; and if

such a thing is to be done, do you yourself assist him in his task. (Bukhari)

Said the Prophet : When your servant prepares food for you, if you do not choose to ask him to partake of it at the same table, at least offer him a morsel of it, for, he has borne the heat of the kitchen and cooked the food for you. (Bukhari)

RENUNCIATION OF WORLDY LIFE NOT PERMISSIBLE.

O children of Adam ! wear your goodly apparel when ye repair to any mosque, and eat ye and drink ; but exceed not ; for, He loveth not those who exceed.

SAY : Who hath prohibited God's goodly raiment, and the healthful viands which He hath provided for his servants ?

SAY : These are for the faithful in this present life, but above all on the day of the resurrection. Thus make we our signs plain for people of knowledge.

(Q. 7:29-31)

AL-HADITH

Said the Prophet : It is not proper or any one to give up all effort to earn one's own livelihood and to simply ask of God to provide him with his means of subsistence. On the other hand, he will have to exert himself for his livelihood, for, you know that the heavens do not rain silver and gold.

(Al-Madinat wal Islam)

It is not a good thing to given up the life of this world for the sake of the Life hereafter, nor is it a good thing to disregard the needs of the Life for the sake of the life of this world. On the other hand, he is a good man who attends to the needs of both the lives at the same time. (Al-Madinat Wal Islam)

Said the Prophet : The best of conveyance is wordliness. If only you know how to keep it under

control, it will lead you safely to bliss in the life hereafter. (Al Madinat Wal Islam)

Occupy yourself with the things of the world, as if you are to keep alive in this world for ever, and work for the life hereafter, as if you are to die the very next day. (Farid Wajidi : Al Madinat Wal Islam)

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Section II – Business Morality

AL-QUR'AN

And use your a full measure and a just balance.
(Q. 6:135)

Weigh therefore with fairness and scant not the balance. (Q. 55:7-9)

And give full measure when you measure and weigh with just balance. (Q. 17:37)

O my people ! give weight and measure with fairness ; purloin not other men's goods ; and perpetrate not injustice on the earth with corrupt practices :
(Q. 11:54)

O Believers ! of truth, many of the teachers and monks do devour man's substance in vanity, and turn them from the Way of God. But to those who treasure up gold and silver and expend it not in the Way of God, announce tidings of a grievous torment. (Q. 9:34)

Verily, God enjoineth you to give back your trusts to their owners, and when ye judge between men, to judge with fairness. Excellent is the practice to which God exhorteth you. (Q. 4:58)

BUSINESS MORALITY :

AL-HADITH

Said the Prophet : An honest and truth loving

merchant will be found on the day of judgement in the company of prophets, lovers of truth, martyrs, and the righteous. (Tirmizi)

The most dishonest of rulers is he who trades among his subjects. (Kunuzul Haqaiq and Tabrani)

Said the Prophet: No one should carry on trade in our markets except he who is conversant with the principles of morality one has to observe in transactions. (Tirmizi)

Said the Prophet: Whenever you sell anything measure it properly. And whenever you purchase a thing see that the measure is properly measured out. (Bukhari)

Said the Prophet: The buyer must explain to the seller the defects if any in the quality of the article offered for sale. Should this be done, the transaction is good. Else; it is positively unholy. (Bukhari)

Said the Prophet: O People! do not go out of your town to meet in advance he who brings his grain to the market for sale, and do not interpose in any transaction effected by offering a higher price. (Muslim and Bukhari)

Abu Huraira narrates: I have heard the Prophet say: "the articles for sale are no doubt sold away quickly by the seller swearing by the quality of the articles. But such transaction is not holy. (Bukhari and Muslim)

The Prophet said: Do not purchase maiden slave singers nor sell, nor train them in the art of singing. Their sale and purchase are unholy transactions and the proceeds are unlawful and filthy. (Taisir ul Usul)

INFLATION OF PRICES:

The Khalif Umar once passed by a merchant in a market who was selling dried grapes at a price lower than the market price. Umar said to him "Bring prices

up to the market level; else get out of the market."

(Malik : Mutta)

Said the Prophet : The man who imports commodities is a good fellow. On the other hand, he who hoards a commodity only to raise its price is a condemnable person. (Ibn Maja)

Said the Prophet : He who keeps back grain from sale for forty days only to sell it at higher prices, take it that such a man is not aware of the existence of God or that God has cut himself off from him. (Taisir Ul Usul)

Said the Prophet : He is a criminal who hoards grain to sell it at higher price. (Ibn Maja)

Said the Prophet : He is a very wicked person who keeps back his grain from coming out into the market, who feels unhappy when the produce of grain is profuse and feels delighted when it is not so.

(Taisir Ul Usul)

The Khalif Umar said : No one should hoard grain and effect increase in prices. No one who has got surplus wealth with him should accumulate in his hand foodstuffs coming from outside and hoard them. He who bears the rigour of heat or cold to bring foodstuffs from outside for open sale in the market, he is my welcome guest. (Malik : Mutta)

Said the Prophet : Those who keep back their hoarded grain from coming into the market and murderers will be classed together on the day of judgement. (Taisur Ul Usul)

Said the Prophet : Do not go out of the market to meet in advance a caravan bringing commodities and effect a rise in prices. (Tirmizi)

Abu Huraira narrates that a person came to the Prophet and requested him to fix the prices of commodities. The Prophet said: "I can only pray for normal conditions to prevail." Another person came forward and made the same request. The Prophet replied,

"God alone fixes the prices. He alone is the Sustainer of Man." (He meant that man should not in self-interest effect the rise in price). (Taisir Ul Usul)

USURY :

AL-QUR'AN

They who swallow down usury, shall arise on the day of resurrection only as one who ariseth whom Satan hath infected by his touch. This, for that they say, "Selling is only the life of usury": and yet God hath allowed selling, and forbidden usury. He then who when this warning shall come to him from His Lord, abstaineth shall have pardon for the past, and his lot shall be with God. But they who return to usury, shall be given over to the Fire; therein shall they abide for ever. (Q. 2:277)

O ye who believe ! Devour not usury, doubling it again and again ! But fear God, that ye may prosper.
(Q. 3:125)

Whatever ye put out at usury to increase it with the substance of others shall have no increase from God : but whatever ye shall give in alms as seeking the face of God, shall be double to you. (Q. 30:39)

If any one find difficulty in discharging a debt; then let there be a respite until it be easy for him : but if ye remit it as alms, it will be better for you, if ye knew it. (Q. 2:280)

AL-HADITH

Said the Prophet: The curse of God rests on him who offers loan on usurious terms, and on him who receives, on those who are witnesses to the transaction and on the writer who writes the deed thereof.

(Muslim, Abu Dawud and Tirmizi)

LOAN WITHOUT INTEREST :

AL-QUR'AN

Who is he that will lend to God a goodly loan? He will double it to him again and again: God is close, but open-handed also: and to Him shall ye return. (Q. 2:246)

Who is he that will lend a generous loan to God? So will he double it to him, and he shall have a noble reward. (Q. 57:11)

AL-HADITH

Jabir, a companion of the Prophet, states: The Prophet owed me some money. He paid back the loan and something over it of his own accord. (Abu Dawud)

Narrates Abu Huraira: Said the Prophet: To delay the refunding of loan is to show cruelty to the creditor. (Bukhari)

Abu Huraira narrates: the Prophet once spoke of a merchant who used to deal in loans. He had given instructions to his agents to write off the loan of any one who was not in a position to refund it, so that God might show forgive him his shortcomings. The Prophet said: Indeed, God forgave him his shortcomings.
(Bukhari)

Abu Sayid narrates: A certain person sustained serious loss through the failure of his crops, and had to contract a huge debt, and when he was not in a position to refund it, the Prophet asked those around him to offer donations towards the liquidation of his loan. The money collected was not enough, whereupon he asked the creditors to forego the balance, as it was beyond the capacity of the man to pay.

(Abu Dawud and Taisir ul Usul)

Salma bin Ak'u narrates: Once we were sitting in the company of the Prophet when a bier was brought before him. Those present requested the Prophet to

offer the funeral prayer for the dead. The Prophet asked : Is there any debt standing against him ? They said : No. Thereupon, the Prophet offered the prayer. A little later came another bier. The people asked the Prophet to offer the funeral prayer. The Prophet asked : Is there any debt standing against him ? They replied : Yes. The Prophet asked : Has he left any property behind ? They said : Yes. He has left three gold coins. The Prophet offered prayers. A third bier was then brought before him. The Prophet asked : Has he left anything behind. They said : No. He then asked again : Is any debt standing against him ? They said : Yes. He owes somebody three gold pieces. The Prophet then said : Let his friends offer the funeral prayer. A companion of the Prophet then said : O Prophet of God ! pray, offer the funeral prayer yourself. I stand surety for the refunding of his loan. Thereupon, the Prophet performed the prayer. (Bukhari)

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Section III—Distribution of Wealth

DIVINE COOPERATION IN PRODUCTION OF WEALTH.

AL-QUR'AN

He (Korah) said, "It (Wealth) hath been given me only on account of the knowledge that is in me.

(Q. 28:77)

"But asks God :

What think ye ? That which ye sow—

Is it ye who cause its upgrowth, or do we cause it to spring forth ?

If we please we could so make your harvest dry and brittle that ye would ever marvel and say,

"Truly we have been at cost, yet are we forbidden harvest."

Let man look at his food :

It was We who rained down the copious rains,

Then cleft the earth with clefts,

And caused the upgrowth of the grain,

And grapes and healing herbs,

And the olive and the palm,

And enclosed gardens thick with trees,

And fruits and herbage,

For the service of yourselves and of your cattle.

(Q. 80:24-32)

EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF WEALTH ;

That none of it (wealth) may circulate among such of you only as are rich. (Q. 59:7)

THE SHARE OF GOD IN PRODUCE GOES TO THE POOR

And what hath come to you that ye expend not for the cause of God? since *the heritage of the Heavens and of the Earth is God's only*. (Q. 58:10)

And God hath abounded to some of you more than to others in the supplies of life ; yet they to whom He hath abounded, impart not thereof to the slaves whom their right hands possess, so that they may share alike. What! will they deny, then, that *these boons are from God?* (Q. 16:73)

But the God-fearing shall dwell amid gardens and fountains,

Enjoying what their Lord hath given them, because, aforetime they were the doers of good :

But little of the night was it that they slept,

And at dawn they prayed for pardon,

And gave due share of their wealth to the suppliant and the outcast. (Q. 51:15-18)

SHARE YOUR EARNINGS WITH OTHERS :

And neglect not thy portion in this world, and be bounteous to others as God hath been bounteous to thee. (Q. 28:77)

But seek, by means of what God hath given thee, to attain the future Mansion ; and neglect not thy part in this world, but be bounteous to others as God hath been bounteous to thee, and seek not to commit excesses on the earth ; for God loveth not those who commit excesses." (Q. 28:73)

And now have We established you on the earth, and given you therein the supports of life. How little do ye give thanks !

He it is who produceth gardens of the vine trellised and untrellised, and the palm trees, and the corn of various food, and olives, and pomegranates, like and unlike. Eat of their fruit when they bear fruit, and pay the due thereof on the day of its ingathering : and be not prodigal, for God loveth not the prodigal.
(Q. 6:142)

And to him who is of kin render his due, and also to the poor and to wayfarer : yet waste not wastefully.

For the wasteful are brethren of the Satans, and Satan was ungrateful to his Lord.

But if thou turn away from them, while thou thyself seekest boons from thy Lord for which thou hopest, at least speak to them with kindly speech :

And let not thy hand be tied up to thy neck ; nor yet open it with all openness, lest thou sit thee down in rebuke, in beggary.

Verily, thy Lord will provide with open hand for whom he pleaseth, and will be sparing. His servants doth he scan, inspect. (Q. 17:28-32)

LABOURING FOR OTHERS ALSO :

AL-HADITH

Said the Prophet : He who earns his livelihood by lawful means to save himself from beggary and to provide for his family and also, out of what he gets, to help his neighbours, the countenance of such a man on the day of judgement will be as bright as the moon on the fourteenth night of the month. (Al-Hilya)

He who works for his parents, he verily works for God, and he who works for his family, even he works for God, and he who works to save himself from starvation, he too works for God, but he who works to satisfy his unlawful desires and for the sake of looking down upon others, he indeed works for Satan.

(Baihaqi)

SENSE OF SACRIFICE FOR THE POOR :

AL-QUR'AN

Who though longing for it themselves, bestowed their food on the poor and the orphan and the captive, (and say) : "We feed you for the sake of God : we seek from you neither recompense nor thanks." (Q. 76:8-9)

They prefer them before themselves, though poverty be their own lot. And with such as are preserved from their own covetousness shall it be well. (Q. 59:7-9)

DISREGARD FOR THE NEEDS OF THE POOR
CONDEMNED :

Aye. But ye honour not the orphan,
Nor urge ye one another to feed the poor,
And ye devour heritages devouring greedily,
And ye love riches with exceeding love. (Q. 54:55)

Have they not journeyed through the land, and seen what hath been the end of those who flourished

before them? God brought destruction on them: and the like of this doth await those who do not believe.

(Q. 47:12)

God proposeth the instance of a city, secured and at ease, to which its supplies came in plenty from every side. But she was thankless for the boons of God; God therefore made her taste the woe of famine and of fear, for what they had done. (Q. 16:113)

SHARE OF THE POOR IN ONE'S EARNINGS:

They will ask thee what they shall bestow in aid to the poor? Say: Let the good which ye bestow be for parents, and kindred, and orphans, and the poor, and the wayfarer; and whatever good ye do, of a truth, God knoweth. (Q. 6:211)

They will ask thee what they shall bestow in aid to the poor?

Say: What ye can spare. Thus God sheweth you his signs that ye may ponder. (Q. 6:217)

INHERITANCE:*

AL-QUR'AN

To every one have we appointed kindred, as heirs of what parents and relatives, and those with whom ye have joined right hands in contract, leave. Give therefore to each their portion. Verily, God witnesseth all things. (Q. 4:37)

Men ought to have a part of what their parents and kindred leave; and women a part of what their parents and kindred leave: whether it be little or much, let them have a stated portion.

And when they who are of kin are present at the

* This also forms a big chapter of the civil law of Islam. Only the leading provisions of it are given here.

division, and the orphans and the poor, let them too have a share; and speak to them with kindly speech.

And let those be afraid to wrong the orphans, who, should they leave behind them weakly offspring, would be solicitous on their account. Let them, therefore, fear God, and let them propose what is right.

Verily they who swallow the substance of the orphan wrongfully, shall swallow down only fire into their bellies, and shall burn in the flame!

With regard to your children, God commandeth you to give the male the portion of two females; and if they be females more than two, then they shall have two-thirds of that which their father hath left: but if she be an only daughter, she shall have the half; and the father and mother of the deceased shall each of them have a sixth part of what he hath left, if he have child; but if he have no child and his parents be his heirs, then his mother shall have the third: and if he have brethren, his mother shall have the sixth, after paying the bequests he shall have bequeathed, and his debts. As to your fathers, or your children, ye know not which of them is the most advantageous to you. This is the law of God. Verily, God is knowing, Wise!

Half of what your wives leave shall be your's, if they have no issue; but if they have issue, then a fourth of what they leave shall be your's, after paying the bequests they shall bequeath, and debts.

And your wives shall have a fourth part of what ye leave, if ye have no issue; but if ye have issue, then they shall have an eight part of what ye leave, after paying the bequests ye shall bequeath, and debts.

If a man or a woman make a distant relation their heir, and he or she have a brother or a sister, each of these two shall be have a sixth; but if there are more than this, then shall they be sharers in a third, after payment of the bequests he shall have bequeathed, and debts.

Without loss to any one. This is the ordinance of God, and God is knowing, Gracious! (Q. 4:8-16)

WILL:

It is prescribed to you, when any one of you is at the point of death, if he leave goods, that he bequeath equitably to his parents and kindred. This is binding on those who fear God. But as for him who after he hath heard the bequest shall change it, surely the wrong of this shall be on those who change it; verily, God Heareth, Knoweth.

But he who feareth from the testator any mistake or wrong, and shall make a settlement between the parties—that shall be no wrong in him: verily, God is Lenient, Merciful. (Q. 2:76-77).

AL-HADITH

Said the Prophet: Distribute your wealth among those whose right to it is specified (by the Quran). (Muslim and Abu Dawud)

THE STYLE OF ECONOMY TO BE REACHED:

Narrates Harisa bin Wah'b: I have heard the Prophet say: "O People offer sadaqa these days; for, a day will come when you will be going round to offer it only to find none coming forward to receive it. Everyone whom you may offer it will say: I wish you had come yesterday; I would then have accepted it. But today I have no need for it. (Bukhari)

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